THE ROAD TO THE GREATER EAST ASIAN WAR

NAKAMURA AKIRA, PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF DOKKYO UNIVERSITY

(English Translation: Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact)

PART 1: PREFACE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

How should we define the Greater East Asian War?

The belief that it was a war of aggression waged by Japan has come to dominate world public opinion, but this question continues to fester in the minds of innumerable Japanese who are searching for honest answers. This book, in which I offer some explanations and new perspectives, is my attempt to shed some light on that conflict.

There is no shortage of academics and commentators who, immersed in the relentless masochistic direction that postwar historical perception has taken, continue to blindly embrace the judgments handed down by the IMTFE. To make matters worse, these same individuals delight in triumphantly and smugly enumerating, to anyone who will listen, the blunders and errors made by their native land: Japan bears sole responsibility for the Greater East Asian War. They boast of being "progressives" because they write books, even history textbooks, that portray Japanese history in the worst light possible.

This writer believes that the great majority of wars stem from complex historical circumstances and causes. For that reason, I refuse to accept any historical perception that unilaterally denounces Japan. Wars erupt for a plethora of trivial, cumulative, and various reasons. Everywhere in the annals of history we find seeds of problems that developed into wars. We also find some that found a peaceful resolution. For the Greater East Asian War, where do we draw the fine, dividing line between war and peace? It is my intention to use a macroscopic approach to explore this quandary and to contemplate the meaning of that conflict. What distinguishes my book from others on this subject is my effort to give Japan due credit for its good-faith, sincere attempts to achieve peace, even if they came to naught, washed away like writing in sand when the tide comes in. In the end, a writer's objective in reexamining history is validation of his own convictions. At the same time, any reader with an open mind should realize that I have not glorified the war beyond its reality.

Headlines like "Nanjing Massacre Claims 300,000 Victims," a criminal charge *and* an absurd fantasy, continue to appear in our newspapers in mammoth typefaces that practically scream at the reader, even today. Trumped-up war-crimes accusations also continue to accrete. Today no one has the backbone to come to speak out in support of our country. Instead, Japan's unprincipled academics, writers, and journalists trip over each other in their rush to broadcast their approval of accusations from abroad, thus

slandering and betraying their homeland. Millions may oppose me, but I shall raise my voice in defense of my native land when the truth is on my side.

It was this wretched state of affairs that compelled me to take up my pen and produce my first booklet. Nothing could please me more than the knowledge that students (Japan's future leaders) might read it as they would a textbook, and that it might nurture an accurate understanding of history, and inspire love and respect for Japan.

This writer's love for his country is boundless. I respect not only the notion of a peaceful Japan, but also the memory of the heroes of the past who fought with all their might and gave their lives for that Japan. A peaceful Japan is very dear to me, but equally dear are the deeds of those men who fought brilliantly and gave their lives for their country and the Japanese people.

Generations upon generations of heroes have sacrificed their precious, irreplaceable lives defending these islands

—Mitsui Koshi (1883-1953)

My heart is with those many brave souls who gave their lives for their country over the years, certainly not with those who revile and slander their native land because it was defeated in war. I firmly believe that it behooves those who have the good fortune to be born, live out their lives, and die here to repay their debt by striving to eradicate false charges against Japan. And though countless works on this topic have already been published, I have taken the liberty to bring my book into the world as well.

A brief mention of terminology: my personal and professional preference for accurate historical terminology compels me to use terms like Greater East Asian War. I have eschewed postwar neologisms like Pacific War and Fifteen Years' War. For the same reason, my choice of names like China and Republic of China has been dictated by context and my desire for historical accuracy.

Now I shall describe the course of events that led to the publication of this book. I began work on a booklet intended as a study guide for my university students on July 15, 1982; it was published in October of the same year. Then I embarked on the preparation of three additional booklets, which were completed in November, 1984; all four volumes bore the title *Study Guide to the Greater East Asian War*. Work on the fifth volume, begun in September 1984, was completed in three and one-half years, on March 9, 1988; it filled 1,400 pages of manuscript paper. I decided against having the fifth volume printed because of its extraordinary length. Instead, I decided to combine all five booklets into one book intended not only for students, but also for the general reader. I began the rewriting process on March 10, 1988, the day after completing the fifth volume. After rewriting for almost a year, I was fortunate enough to be offered an opportunity to have my booklets serialized in the monthly magazine *Shokun!*, published by Bungeishunju Ltd. For that purpose I used, for the first time, a title that had been on my mind for some time: *The Road to the Greater East Asian War*. The response to the series, which

appeared over six months between the May 1989 and October 1989 issues, was excellent. I was reminded that this was what the Japanese people were longing to learn about. Since there was not enough material in the series for a book, I began writing again once the last installment had appeared, adding approximately 1,000 pages. I was very pleased that what had begun life as a study guide was now, after eight years of work, a proper book!

In connection with the writing of this book and its publication, I am indebted to a great many people. But I am especially grateful to Professors Kobori Keiichiro (of Tokyo University) and Nagoshi Futaranosuke (of Takachiho University of Commerce) for their thoughtfulness in providing me with the opportunity to publish this work in book form. I would also like to thank the members of the 1st Infantry Regiment Veterans Association (China Garrison Army), who were kind enough to share their exceedingly valuable recollections of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident.

Special thanks must be proffered to Otsuka Kenzo, who was attached to Infantry Brigade Headquarters, China Garrison Army, during the period when both the Marco Polo Bridge and Tongzhou incidents erupted, for his thoughtfulness and generosity. Mr. Otsuka provided me with copious advice, as well as reference material, records, translations – enough to fill a book. These are first-rate resources, and they are particularly valuable since he was on the scene when the incidents occurred. The material he gave me is a product of his extensive knowledge of China, prodigious memory, and inquiring mind. I deeply regret that I was able to use only a portion of it in the preparation of this book.

I also offer my heartfelt gratitude to Aizawa Hiroaki (president of Tendensha Publishing Co.) who, day and in a gesture uncommon in this day and age, had the generosity of spirit to offer to publish this book, as well as to Tendensha's editor in chief, Yuhara Masataka, who painstakingly organized my voluminous manuscript.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife for her assistance. She set aside her household responsibilities to read each installment of the *Shokun!* Series before it was submitted for publication, and with great good humor!

Nakamura Akira

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

INTRODUCTION: HISTORICAL CONTROVERSIES

CHAPTER 1: THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN JAPAN-KOREA RELATIONS

1. KOREAN XENOPHOBIA AND COMPLACENCY
2. THE OPENING OF KOREA
3. KOREA: CAUGHT BETWEEN PROGRESS AND SUBSERVIENCE
4. STATE WITH LITTLE DESIRE FOR INDEPENDENCE

CHAPTER 2: THE 1ST SINO-JAPANESE WAR

1. OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES AND COURSE OF THE CONFLICT
2. CHINESE ATROCITIES
3. TREATY OF SHIMONOSEKI; THE TRIPLE INTERVENTION
4. KOREA AND THE 1ST SINO-JAPANESE WAR

CHAPTER 3: THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

1. HIGH COST OF THE TRIPLE INTERVENTION
2. US EXPANSION INTO THE PACIFIC; OPEN DOOR POLICY
3. RUSSIA'S SOUTHWARD ADVANCE; ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE
4. TWO NATIONS' LIFE-AND-DEATH STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL
5. THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR AND THE JAPANESE PEOPLE
6. RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR VIEWED IN THE CONTEXT OF WORLD HISTORY

CHAPTER 4: THE BEGINNINGS OF DISCORD BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE US

1. BATTLE FOR RAILROAD SUPREMACY IN MANCHURIA
2. US ANTI-JAPANESE EXCLUSIONARY POLICIES AND PRACTICES

CHAPTER 5: JAPAN AND WORLD WAR I

1. A SECOND LOOK AT THE TWENTY-ONE DEMANDS
2. LANSING-ISHII AGREEMENT
3. THE SIBERIAN INTERVENTION
4. THE TRAGIC NIKOLAYEVSK INCIDENT

CHAPTER 6: US RETALIATION: WASHINGTON NAVAL CONFERENCE

1. CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING UP TO WASHINGTON NAVAL CONFERENCE
2. CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONFERENCE

CHAPTER 7: THE ILLUSION OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

1. TRAJECTORY OF US ANTI-JAPANESE ACTIONS
2. COMMUNIZATION OF OUTER MONGOLIA
3. ATROCITIES OF THE "REAL CHINA"

CHAPTER 8: REVOLUTIONARY CHINA AND COMMUNISM

1. Communist impact on a China in turmoil
2. First United Front
3. Chinese Communist conspiracies; Communist-Nationalist antagonism

CHAPTER 9: CONTENDING WITH RED CHINA / CHINA'S COMMUNISTS

1. The Nanjing Incident
2. Shidehara's idealistic diplomacy vs. reality
3. Tanaka diplomacy: reaction to Northern Expedition
4. The Tanaka Memorial hoax
5. The Jinan Incident
6. The Kellogg-Briand Pact and the right of self-defense

CHAPTER 10: THE MANCHURIAN / MUKDEN INCIDENT

1. Tensions in Manchuria; Liutiaogou Incident
2. Quarter-century buildup [of animosity?]
3. Overview of the conflict
4. Truth about the Manchurian independence movement
5. Domestic and foreign causes of the conflict
6. Was Manchuria part of China?
7. Thoughts on the conflict and the founding of a nation

CHAPTER 11: JAPAN-CHINA RELATIONS: NORTH CHINA

1. The Tanggu Truce
2. Improvement in Japan-China relations
3. Umezu-He Agreement
4. Negotiations concerning Prime Minister Hirota's three principles
5. North China Autonomous Movement; Hebei and Chahar autonomous governments

CHAPTER 12: CHINESE CIVIL WAR AND THE XI'AN INCIDENT

1. Chiang Kai-shek's ideology and policies
2. Comintern machinations
3. Xi'an Incident

CHAPTER 13: WHAT TRANSPIRED AT MARCO POLO BRIDGE

1. How the Marco Polo Bridge Incident unfolded
2. Fabrication of the "Japanese plot" theory
3. The real instigators
4. Japanese efforts to curb expansion
5. Tongzhou Incident

CHAPTER 14: WAR SPREADS FROM SHANGHAI TO NANJING

1. Failure of the Funatsu Peace Initiative
2. Battle of Shanghai
3. Capture of Nanjing

CHAPTER 15: REEXAMINING THE NANJING "MASSACRE"

1. The Nanjing "Massacre" and the IMTFE
2. Doubts about massacre accusation
3. Breeding ground of the massacre myth

CHAPTER 16: EFFORTS TO MAKE PEACE WITH CHINA

1. The Trautman Mediation
2. Wang Jingwei: The tragic fate of a true patriot

CHAPTER 17: THE BATTLE AGAINST COMMUNISM

1. Growth of red fascism
2. Japan-Germany Anti-Comintern Pact: barrier against communism
3. Broken non-aggression pact
4. Burgeoning Soviet militarism
5. Changkufeng Incident: USSR provokes Japan
6. Nomonhan Incident

CHAPTER 18: JAPAN'S RESPONSE TO WORSENING JAPAN-US RELATIONS

1. Expansion of US Navy
2. Quarantine Speech and USS *Panay* Incident
3. Japan-US rivalry over Open Door Policy
4. Economic sanctions against Japan; amendment of Neutrality Act
5. Negotiated Japanese advance into northern French Indochina
6. Japan-Netherlands negotiations; pressure from US and UK
7. Recognition from Wang regime
8. Tripartite Pact

CHAPTER 19: JAPAN-US NEGOTIATIONS

1. Negotiations commence and stall
2. Japanese advance into southern French Indochina
3. Negotiations between Japan and the US

CHAPTER 20: JAPAN'S PEACEMAKING EFFORTS FAIL

1. Tojo Cabinet's peacemaking efforts
2. US officials' impatience to go to war
3. Japan demonstrates willingness to compromise
4. The Hull note
5. Pearl Harbor: a surprise attack?
6. Who welcomed the outbreak of hostilities?
7. December 8 and the Japanese people

EPILOGUE: REASSESSMENT OF THE GREATER EAST ASIAN WAR

INDEX

INTRODUCTION: HISTORICAL CONTROVERSIES

1. Capitulating to Chinese and Korean demands

During the postwar era, historical controversies are the most nagging problems confronting Japan. Just as an ex-convict, forever branded, must live out his days as a pariah, Japan has seen its history reviled. Encumbered with the aggressor stigma, our country has yet to resume its rightful status in the international community.

Here are some examples of historical controversies that have plagued Japan:

1. Chinese interference during the Ministry of Education's selection of history textbooks for use in Japan's high schools in 1982 (the First Textbook Controversy).
2. The international uproar that ensued in 1986 when both China and Korea interfered in the same selection process in connection with *New Edition: Japanese History*,[1] another high school textbook.
3. Korean protests against a comment made by Minister of Education Fujio Masayuki in 1986 to the effect that Korea bears as much responsibility as Japan for the annexation of Korea, which was the result of an agreement between the two nations. Fujio was subsequently dismissed by Prime Minister Nakasone.[2]
4. Chinese protests and harassment in connection with comments made by Minister of Education Okuno Seisuke to the effect that Japan did not wage a war of aggression, which led to his resignation, also in 1986.

It is not hard to imagine the distress experienced by Japanese officials in the face of such protests and harassment, distress that perhaps drove them to respond obsequiously.

A similar problem erupted in February 1989 in the wake of a comment Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru made at a Diet session. In response to a question, the prime minister said, "The question of whether (World War II) was a war of aggression should be decided by the historians of the future." This prompted an outcry from the Chinese Foreign Ministry: "Japanese militarism unleashed a war of aggression, which brought great misfortune upon the Chinese and Asian people. We will not tolerate the misrepresentation or denial of this unfortunate chapter in history." The response of the Japanese government to that outburst was to relay its fundamental stance to our diplomats, and then to ask the Chinese "for their understanding." That stance was: "We cannot disavow past aggressive behavior toward China." The message from the Chinese was: "There is no need to wait for the historians of the future. Japan must abide by the position taken by the People's Republic of China."

Here I would like to quote from an article I wrote in 1987:

---

[1] （新編日本史）published in 1987 under the title *Saishin Nihonshi*, （最新日本史） (Updated Japanese history) by Meiseisha.

[2] https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E8%97%A4%E5%B0%BE%E6%AD%A3%E8%A1%8C (retrieved 07/2022).

> Each time the publication of a textbook or a prime minister's pilgrimage to Yasukuni Shrine sets off a dispute between Japan and China, the Chinese use the same, overworked language: "We object to the juxtaposition of offender and victim." The notion of Japan as the malefactor and China, its victim, forms the basis for China's official historical view. The Chinese employ arrogant, intrusive language to describe Japanese textbooks or pilgrimages to Yasukuni Shrine because they believe that they were victimized by the Japanese. Unfortunately, a great many Japanese have embraced this official Chinese historical view. Every time the Chinese complain that "the Japanese show no remorse for their evil deeds," our immediate reaction is to cower: such is the wretched position that Japan finds itself in now. The "China as victim" claim has become China's way of compelling the Japanese to grovel. Unless we cease acquiescing to Chinese demands, Japan will have no choice but to be the servant, and China the master, for all eternity.[3]

How long must the Japanese people endure servitude to China?

2. History: chronicle of a people

The first thing we must remember when we write our own history, the history of Japan, is that there is no need for us to consult China or Korea.

After my series, "The Road to the Greater East Asian War," appeared in *Shokun!*, I engaged in a dialogue with a historian who specializes in the modern era.[4] During our discussion, he countered my every mark with "But China will not accept that." Apparently, in his mind, only accounts that were accepted and sanctioned by the Chinese constituted accurate history. I know for a fact that there are plenty of other Japanese historians who always have China in the back of their minds when they do their research. The history that emerges from such a subservient spirit – never mind, it does not deserve to be called history.

No nation seeks the understanding and approval of another state before recording its own history. Or perhaps some do, but only colonies or protectorates, not independent states. It is common knowledge that Chinese and Korean history textbooks are riddled with anti-Japanese accounts that are an amalgam of truth and lies. However, would the Chinese or Koreans accommodate requests from Japan to revise those accounts? Never! They would hurl vitriol at the Japanese, accusing us of interfering in their domestic affairs.

History is a chronicle of a particular people, or ethnic group. It is natural for every ethnic group, for every nation, to adopt an affectionate view of its past. Consequently, every nation does its best to cast its history in a favorable light. Chinese history textbooks devote dozens of pages to the Opium Wars (1839-42, 1856-60), while it is difficult to find even one line about those conflicts in

[3] Nakamura Akira, "中国＝被害者説の神話"(Mythology: the China-as-victim argument), *Shokun!*, January 1987.

[4] *Shokun!*, March-April 1990.

British history textbooks. But I have yet to hear of any protests lodged by the Chinese about these particular omissions. Even if such had been lodged, the UK would probably not entertain them.

History is intimately linked with national sentiments and interests. No common understanding of history between or among nations is possible. For instance, if Japan and the USSR had a common understanding of history, then the Northern Territories would have already been returned to Japan. But they have not, and the reason why can probably be explained by the difference between the two nations' understanding of history.

Every nation's history has a nationalistic tinge, and Japanese history is no exception. To define history as a "science" is to adopt the specious reasoning of Marxism (specious reasoning that will cease to be taken seriously when the 20th century ends). History that is written after being accepted, understood, and approved by another nation or nations may endure as the epitaph of a defunct ethnicity, but will not endure as genuine history, as the soul and the memory of a nation and its people.

3. Interpretation of the Greater East Asian War

There are other controversies in addition to those concerning textbooks and official pilgrimages to Yasukuni Shrine. I speak of the annual controversy over the raising of the Japanese flag and the singing of our national anthem at graduation ceremonies.

We also have the "war responsibility" controversy, which surfaced at about the time when Emperor Showa's health began to fail. To begin with, the word *responsibility* is intended for use in connection with unfair and unlawful actions. If we are speaking of *war responsibility*, we must begin by pronouncing the Greater East Asian War an unfair war (a war of aggression), or at least a war initiated for no good reason. Therefore, if we arrive at the conclusion that the Greater East Asian War was not a war of aggression, but a defensive war, the debate over responsibility becomes meaningless. Then, at the basis of the debate over war responsibility lurks a battle between historical perceptions. Regardless of whether we are talking about legal responsibility or moral responsibility, we end up with an empty argument.

Then how do we characterize the Greater East Asian War? Are we truly unable to explain the conflict except in terms of the conspiracy theories and the war-of-aggression historical view imposed by the IMTFE?

Wars are conflicts between nations, but ultimately, they are no more than conflicts between societies. It should be possible to arrive at a convincing interpretation and evaluation of that war by comparing each side's past claims and positions, and the evolution of their relationships over the years, just as we might when disputes among individuals are involved. This process does not require a historical perception where a war of aggression is a political ideology that forces facts to be dependent upon theories.

By performing a structural analysis of the Greater East Asian War, and retracing its progress, I was able to discover two main themes, i.e., negotiations between Japan and the US in connection with the Open Door Policy, and the battle against communism. That discovery enabled me to position the Greater East Asian War at the climactic point where those two themes met and

expanded. This book is my attempt to validate my interpretation of the Greater East Asian War with the aid of a great many historical facts. Unlike the theoretical historical perception that seeks to explain all historical phenomena, which is similar to the historical perception rooted in Marxism-Leninism (the collapse and fallacies of Marxism-Leninism, as we are well aware, will soon be exposed by history), my interpretation has been obtained by analyzing history leading up to the Greater East Asian War, and only that particular aspect of history. Allow me to add that there is nothing ambiguous about my historical perception.

4. Defying postwar taboos

Human relationships are complex, and so are the history and events that lead up to wars, which are disputes among nations. To make simple, precise pronouncements designating one side the malefactor and the other, the victim, is to distort the truth.

A formula that designates Japan and only Japan the malefactor, and China and Korea the victims, has become the official historical view in both countries. Japanese academics, educators, and fourth estate consider objections to that perception taboo. However, in this book I fully intend to address this taboo. After all, in every dispute there is usually some degree of responsibility on both sides.

This is especially true in wars that have a complex historical background. There is more than one way to seek responsibility in history. Not only the exercise of military force, but also negligence, conservatism, obstinacy, domestic conflict, corruption, xenophobia, violations of covenants, betrayal, territorial ambition, and lack of willingness to compromise are major causative factors that exacerbate international relations, invite historical chaos, and bear a reasonable amount of responsibility to history. If, in a war, there is a responsible party (nation), the word *responsibility* must be used in its broad sense. In other words, it must include any of the aforementioned factors that are relevant to the situation at hand. A writer who fails to do that is burying the truth. It is absolutely imperative to determine where responsibility lies. That is what I attempt to accomplish in this book, and taboos will not deter me.

Now I shall proceed to tell the story behind the Greater East Asian War. This is my attempt to reexamine modern history, which is premised on doubts about the perception that Japan waged a war of aggression. This may seem like a roundabout way of doing things, but since my position is to emphasize the historical background of the war, I must follow the standard format, meaning that I shall begin with the relationship between Meiji Japan and China and Korea, both of which were on the verge of modernization.

CHAPTER 1: THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN JAPANESE-KOREAN RELATIONS

1. KOREAN XENOPHOBIA AND COMPLACENCY

Modern Sino-Japanese relations begin on equal footing

Anyone who believes that relations between Japan and China at the beginning of the modern era were confrontational is terribly mistaken. This revelation may surprise some readers, but Sino-Japanese relations in the modern era started off on an equal footing. Doubters would do well to peruse the Sino-Japanese Friendship and Trade Treaty of 1871, the first treaty, and an equal treaty at that, concluded between the two nations.

During the Edo era (1603-1868), the relationship between Japan and China was handled by private individuals. In August 1870, by which time Japan had decided, once and for all, to proceed with the Meiji Renovation, the first step toward modernization, the Japanese proposed establishing diplomatic relations with China, but were rebuffed. However, diplomats Li Hongzhang and Zeng Guofan pressed the Qing court to accept Japan's proposal, explaining how China would benefit by inaugurating commerce with Japan, which was on its way to becoming a modern nation. The court finally acquiesced and negotiations between the two nations commenced in May of 1871; the Sino-Japanese Friendship and Trade Treaty, comprising 18 articles, was signed in July 1871. The provisions of the treaty, which extols the friendship between Japan and China, are expressed in highly refined language. For instance, here is Article 1:

> Relations of amity shall henceforth be maintained in redoubled force between China and Japan, in measure as boundless as the heaven and the earth. In all that regards the territorial possessions of either country the two Governments shall treat each the other with proper courtesy, without the slightest infringement or encroachment on either side, to the end that there may be for evermore peace between them undisturbed.[1]

Unlike treaties concluded in later years, written in hackneyed legalese, the cultivated turns of phrase in this treaty harbor the promise of cordial relations for all eternity.

An important aspect of the 1871 treaty was the acknowledgement of mutual extraterritoriality and consular jurisdiction, which made it an equal treaty. With consular jurisdiction, if a Japanese commits a crime in China, the Japanese consul reserves the right to judge him in accordance with Japanese law; similarly, if a Chinese commits a crime in Japan, the Chinese consul has the right to judge him in accordance with Chinese law. Treaties that afford consular jurisdiction to one party, but not the other, are unequal treaties. Commercial treaties concluded during the Ansei era (1854-60) between Japan and the Western powers (the US, the UK, the Netherlands, Russia, and France) were called unequal

[1] https://worldjpn.grips.ac.jp/documents/texts/pw/18710913.T1E.html (retrieved 07/2022).

treaties because (in addition to their failure to grant tariff autonomy to Japan), they did not grant the right of consular jurisdiction to Japan.

The various treaties signed between China and the Western powers subsequent to the Opium Wars were also unequal treaties that put China at a disadvantage. For that reason, Japan would have preferred to enjoy the same rights as the Western powers did via their treaties with China. But Japan's wishes came to naught, since its national strength was markedly inferior to that of the Western powers, as was its diplomatic prowess.

In any case, the Sino-Japanese Friendship and Trade Treaty served as the starting point for formal Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations, which had ceased to exist after the Muromachi era (1336-1573). The 1871 treaty is of great significance because it placed the two nations on an equal footing. If the 1st Sino-Japanese War had not broken out 23 years later, that treaty would likely still be in force today. and perhaps the two nations would have been able to sustain a peaceful relationship. However, all treaties between two warring nations automatically become null and void as soon as hostilities commence. And that became the fate of the Sino-Japanese Friendship and Trade Treaty of 1871.

It was replaced by the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, which was concluded in 1896. This was an unequal treaty, differing from the previous treaty in several ways, e.g., granting extraterritoriality only to Japan, and not granting China tariff autonomy. Differences of opinion and disagreements on these matters surfaced during attempts to revise the treaty. The failure to resolve them became an enormous problem that culminated in the Manchurian Incident in 1931. Perhaps the seeds of that incident were already being sowed during the 1st Sino-Japanese War.

The difference between the 1871 and 1896 treaties reflected the shift from a relationship between equals to an unequal relationship. The direct cause of that shift, unequivocally, the 1st Sino-Japanese War. Then, why did that war break out? Does Japan bear the responsibility for its inception? Or was it China? Or Korea?

Korea rejects Japan's diplomatic overtures

It was the Korean problem that led to the 1st Sino-Japanese War. However, no discussion of that conflict can take place unless we are familiar with the relationship between Japan and Korea at the time.

Relations between Japan and Joseon Korea had broken off as a result of two campaigns against Korea[2] ordered by Imperial Regent Toyotomi Hideyoshi. In 1607, after his death, Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu succeeded in reestablishing diplomatic relations with Korea. Subsequently, Korea dispatched emissaries to Japan on a regular basis (Korean delegations visited Japan 12 times) until 1811. Thereafter, Korean envoys delivered tribute to Tsushima, a Japanese island located between Japan and Korea. The Shogunate often thought about

[2] Bunroku (1592) and Keichō (1598) campaigns.

reestablishing diplomatic relations, but distracted by other problems both at home and abroad, let the matter languish.

After the Meiji Renovation began, the plan was for interchange between Japan and China to take place with Korea as the intermediary, as it had previously. In January 1868 the new government sent notifications to some nations announcing the restoration of imperial rule. But the notification to Korea was sent through Sō Yoshiaki, *daimyō* (lord) of Tsushima domain, who had been serving as the intermediary between Japan and Korea. He was also asked to deliver a message from the Japanese government stating its desire to reestablish diplomatic relations. However, the Koreans refused to accept the message. The reason given for their refusal was that the message from Sō contained several Chinese characters that did not appear in previous missives of that sort. They were the characters representing *Imperial House of Japan*, *imperial decree*, and *imperial court*. Additionally, the seal the Japanese had affixed to the message was a new one, replacing the one that had been supplied by Korea.

For nearly 500 years, ever since Taejo, the first king of the Joseon dynasty, decided to submit to Ming China at the end of the 14th century, Korea had pledged allegiance to China. In fact, the name Korea (then Joseon, Chosun, or Choson) was chosen by China. Since Korea was a tributary state of China, in the minds of the Koreans, the Chinese characters to which they took offense could be used only when referring to China.

The reason given by the Koreans for rejecting Japan's overtures was the departure from traditional formalities and language. But when a system of government changes, it is reasonable to make adjustments that affect politics and diplomacy, be they cosmetic or otherwise. After all, strict adherence to old traditions makes renewal impossible. The other nations of the world recognized Japan's new government. Even China, known for clinging stubbornly to tradition, entered into diplomatic relations with Japan three years later, in 1874, as already stated. But Japan's closest neighbors, the Koreans, were incapable of comprehending Japan's renovation, no matter how many times it was explained to them. This misunderstanding marked the beginning of the unfortunate history of relations between the two nations.

Koreans apprehensive about becoming Japan's servants

Then, in March of 1869, in an attempt to clear up any misunderstandings, the Japanese government submitted a rebuttal to the Koreans. It said that, as the Koreans were well aware, Japan's emperor had presided over the national administration of Japan for more than 2,000 years. The Chinese character for *emperor* was used now because changes had occurred, and the emperor had personally taken charge of the government. From now on the imperial government would handle diplomatic matters, which had previously been entrusted to the Tsushima domain. A new seal had been created as a symbol of Japan's sincere desire for cordial relations with Korea.

The Koreans continued to spurn Japanese overtures, insisting that the Japanese were using the Chinese characters for *emperor* and *imperial decree* because of their fixation on

making Korea Japan's servant. Here is an excerpt from one of their deceptive high-ranking Korean officials who obviously had underlying motives.

> We must never tell [the Japanese] that we would prefer not to enter into diplomatic relations with them. We should base the justification for our stance on time-honored custom. Using ambiguous, equivocal language, we must declare that although we are not opposed to being on amicable terms with our neighbors, we are wedded to the traditional ways. We shall state and restate our response in the vaguest manner possible, and await a rejoinder from the other party. Should the Japanese become impatient and break off the negotiations, then they shall have to bear the responsibility for the consequences. At that juncture, our only choice shall be to devote our national strength to waging war.[3]

Today one of the popular opinions among Korean historians is that the Japanese used the word *emperor* because they wanted to enslave Korea. If that had been the case, then why would the Japanese have used the following language in the Treaty of Ganghwa, concluded eight years later (and said to have been forced upon the Koreans)? There was no need for the Japanese to use such language if it did not say what they meant.

> ARTICLE I.
> Chosen [Korea] being an independent state enjoys the same sovereign rights as does Japan.
>
> In order to prove the sincerity of the friendship existing between the nations, their intercourse shall henceforward be carried on in terms of equality and courtesy, each avoiding the giving of offence by arrogance or manifestations of suspicion.[4]

A more serious problem lay in the fact that over several hundred years, Korea had become the servant of Ming and Qing China.

Korean stance: inflexible and obtuse

This was hardly the first occasion on which the Koreans had rejected attempts to establish friendly relations. Two years earlier, in 1866, an incident had taken place involving the *SS General Sherman*, an American merchant vessel. When the ship arrived at a location near Pyongyang on the Taedong River, its captain requested provisions and fuel, and permission to engage in commerce. The Koreans refused, destroyed the *General Sherman* by ramming a burning fireship into it, and killed its entire crew. In the same year the Koreans repelled a French fleet that had arrived at Ganghwa Island to protest the murder of nine French

[3] Tabohashi Kiyoshi, *Kindai Nissen kankei no kenkyū* (A study of modern relations between Japan and Korea) (Seoul: Office of the Governor-General of Korea, 1940).

[4] https://worldjpn.grips.ac.jp/documents/texts/pw/18760226.T1E.html (Treaty of Ganghwa is also known as Treaty of Peace and Friendship Between the Empire of Japan and the Kingdom of Corea) (retrieved 07/2022).

missionaries. At that time, King Gojong's father, who was known as the Daewongun, was acting as regent for the young monarch, and thus was in control of state affairs. His policies were vigorously and staunchly exclusionist and isolationist. The tragic history that was to unfold between Japan and Korea, the former open and progressive and the latter closed and inflexible, was already incubating.

In September 1869 the Japanese government transferred jurisdiction over diplomatic matters relating to Korea from the So family to the Foreign Ministry. It made perfect sense for Japan, which had taken the first step toward becoming a modern nation, to dispense with diplomacy conducted by private individuals and unsupported by treaties. In December of that year the government dispatched two Foreign Ministry staff members, Sata Hakubō and Moriyama Shigeru, to Busan. Their mission was to request a response to the diplomatic message announcing the renovation, but the Koreans refused to cooperate. In March of 1870, having observed conditions in Korea, Sata returned to Japan and presented a memorial to Foreign Minister Sawa Nobuyoshi. In it Sata wrote: "They are arrogant and egotistical. No matter how hard we try to make them understand, they will not listen." Sata suggested that the deadlock with the Koreans could not be overcome unless Japan sent 30 battalions of soldiers to Korea to convince them. His conclusion, which he reached after personally observing the Koreans and the situation in their country, was a radical one: send a military expedition to Korea.[5]

Sata's 30-battalion suggestion was derided, then died a quiet death. But his stance certainly deserves our attention because it was not a reactionary one. Sata advocated punitive action after having carefully observed and experienced first-hand the unvarnished relationship between the two nations from the viewpoint of a diplomat.

The Japanese government did not adopt a militaristic policy toward Korea. In October 1870 it dispatched envoys to Korea, who carried with them a letter from the foreign minister requesting diplomatic relations. This was the first such message that did not involve the mediation of the So domain. It did not contain the Chinese characters for *emperor*, *imperial edict*, or *imperial court*, but the Koreans rejected it nonetheless. They insisted that all negotiations be done as before through the So domain. After waiting in Busan for more than a year, the delegation returned to Japan empty-handed. During that time, the Daewongun erected anti-appeasement stelae in all eight of Korea's provinces, exacerbating xenophobia and anti-Japanese sentiment among the Koreans.

[5] Tabohashi, *op. cit.*

2. THE OPENING OF KOREA

Saigō seeks justification for punitive expedition against Korea

In 1872 the Japanese government terminated the arrangement whereby all interchange with Korea was handled by Sō *daimyō*, and took charge of all negotiations with Korea. The Koreans reacted to this change by engaging in cruel, ruthless behavior. For instance, they blocked deliveries of firewood, coal, and provisions to the Japanese Pavilion in Choryang, Busan, where Japanese diplomats lived and worked when they visited Korea. In 1873 exclusionist sentiment grew even more malevolent; in addition to preventing supplies from reaching the Japanese Pavilion, the Koreans demonstrated their hatred of Japan openly by posting anti-Japanese notices in front of the pavilion's gate. When news of those actions reached Tokyo, the desire to launch a punitive expedition against Korea immediately intensified.

Chancellor of the Realm Sanjō Sanetomi prepared a draft proposal in which he was critical of the Koreans: "Not only did they fail to respond when we acted in good faith, but they exacerbated the situation by adopting an arrogant, insulting attitude." He recommended dispatching sufficient Army and Navy personnel to protect Japanese nationals residing in Korea, and sending envoys to Korea, instructing them to negotiate with the Koreans and convince them that the Japanese position was the correct one.

The draft proposal contained two articles, one concerning the dispatching of troops, and the other sending a special envoy. However, Councillor Saigō Takamori rejected the first one, and approved of the second. Saigō's reasoning was: "If we send troops immediately, the Koreans will fear they are being subjugated by Japan. This would be a bad beginning because it would be inconsistent with our esteem for Korea. We must first dispatch a responsible envoy plenipotentiary who will explain Japan's intentions to the Koreans providing ample justification, and convince the Korean officials to see the error of their ways."[6]

Saigō volunteered himself as envoy plenipotentiary, and said that he would not be accompanied by military personnel, not even one soldier. Armed only with the knowledge that he was right and a sense of justice, he would arrive in Hanseong (present-day Seoul) and negotiate. If his efforts were unsuccessful (if the Koreans remained attached to their arrogant stance and killed him), then and only then should Japan send troops to Korea.

Seikanron (literally "advocacy of a punitive expedition against Korea") is often misunderstood. Saigō subscribed to Bushido, the samurai code of chivalry, but he had no interest in conquests of any sort. According to Uchimura Kanzō's *Representative Men of Japan*, "Saigō had very strong ethical objections to starting a war for the sole purpose of conquest. He never enjoyed crushing the weak. Saigō said that George Washington was his hero; he detested Napoleon and others of his ilk. These facts alone prove that Saigō was not a slave of base ambition."[7]

[6] Uchimura Kanzō, *Representative Men of Japan*, trans. Inamori Kazuo (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2003).

[7] *Ibid.*

This passage offers a superb description of Saigō's disposition. Because he did not want to wage an unjustifiable war, he emphasized the necessity for a justifiable pretext for dispatching troops; to that end he was even willing to sacrifice his own life. One of the teachings that form Saigō's legacy states: "Diplomatic interchange cannot be accomplished unless we tread the path of righteousness and are willing to sacrifice our lives in the course of representing our country."[8]

By advocating what he did, Saigō was practicing what he preached.

Japan: modern-age pioneer of East Asia

The meaning of the term *seikanron*, which has an assertive ring to it, becomes clear only when we understand it within the context of the grand foreign policy that the Japanese of the late shogunate and early Meiji eras envisioned. For instance, Satō Nobuhiro, Yoshida Shōin, and other intellectuals active at the close of the Tokugawa shogunate are remembered for having championed the quest for hegemony over the Asian continent. They were opposed to passive resistance in the face of the rapid inroads made by Western powers, but in favor of accomplishing an Asian revival through the establishment of a robust overseas Japanese presence that would check white imperialism.

By the middle of the 19th century, Japan's neighbors were in a deplorable state. Senescent, sickly China lacked the energy needed to resist Western colonialism. The Koreans knew that their nation was a tributary of China; however, they knew nothing about the world situation. Wallowing in ignorance, they were completely unaware of the looming menace from the Western powers. Japanese intellectuals of the late shogunate were without any doubt whatsoever, the modern-age pioneers of East Asia. They and they alone, in that region, were not only aware of the threat from the West, and but also issued warnings about that threat. Except for Japan, all of Asia was in decline – asleep, as it were. It was the inevitable course of history that its foreign-policy philosophy placed Japan in a position of leadership. When a void, powerless area is surrounded by aggressive, intimidating forces, it is devoured, subsumed. East Asia's only hope for withstanding and repelling enemy attacks was forging a strong union with a strong leader.

Here I would like to mention that in the mid-19th century, toward the end of the shogunate, a Korean Confucianist scholar named Yi Hang-no advanced a school of thought known as *wijeon cheoksa* (defend justice and expel evil). By this he meant upholding Confucianism and expelling Christianity. In 1866, when American and French battleships arrived in Korea, Yi presented his extremist, exclusionist argument to the king: "By battling the pirates we can protect Korean Confucianism, but if we allow ourselves to become acquainted with foreign bandits, humankind will descend into the realm of brutes."[9] This rigid ideology was handed down to Yi's followers, and cast a long shadow on the evolution of modern Korean. According to one Korean scholar, this

[8] Saigō Takamori, *Nanshū ō ikun* (Teachings of the late Nanshū) (Tokyo: Kadokawa, 2017); Nanshū was Saigō's pen name.

[9] Kang Jae-eun / Kang Chae-on, *Chōsen no jōi to kaika: kindai Chōsen ni totte no Nihon* (Korea's exclusion of foreigners and the flourishing of Korean civilization: Japan from the standpoint of modern Korea) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1977).

philosophy was in no way exclusionist. Rather, it advocated politics, diplomacy, and society. Pan-Asianism, based on the bonds of loyalty among Korea, China, and Japan in the face of Western aggression encroachment on Asia. Unfortunately, Japan's treachery gave rise to rifts among the three nations.

However, the Japanese had realized that one means of resisting the Western powers was to *temporarily* acknowledge Japan's impotence in the face of Western power, bow to it by opening its doors, and embrace modern civilization. They had also realized that joining hands with Korea and China in the spirit of Pan-Asianism was an impracticable proposition. After all, Korea was still under the thumb of the self-righteous *wijeong cheoksa* mentality, and China was still clinging to imperious Sinocentrism. The unbridgeable gap in awareness of the world situation among the three nations was enough to convince Japanese intellectuals of the late shogunate and early Meiji era that any revival of East Asia must be led by Japan.

It is mistaken to call Saigō's advocacy of a punitive expedition against Korea an aggressive ideology; that it is a mistake will become self-evident. Unlike a scholar's abstract musings, Saigō's ideas about policy were rooted in an acute awareness of the world situation.

In 1871 Saigō had sent Army Maj.-Gen. Kirino Toshiaki to Hokkaido on an inspection tour. He also drafted a plan that would help Japan prepare for a southward Russian advance; it involved securing territory in Karafuto (present-day South Sakhalin) and the Primorskaya Oblast. In 1872 Saigō dispatched Army Lt. Col. Kitamura Shigeyori and Major Beppu Shinsuke to Korea on an inspection tour. He also sent Ikenoue Shirō of Kagoshima and Takeichi Seikan of Tosa as representatives of the Foreign Ministry to Manchuria, on whose soil no Japanese had previously trod, instructing them to familiarize themselves with military geography (for strategic purposes), politics, the financial situation and even manners and customs. In early 1873 he instructed Army Maj. Kabayama Sukenori and Naval Secretary Kodama Toshikuni to visit South China and Taiwan to observe the situation there. Saigō's foreign-policy perspective extended not only to the North and the Asian continent, but also farther afield, to the South.

Korea was not the only territory Saigō was watching. Therefore, we can only understand his argument in favor of a punitive expedition against Korea as part of an ambitious East Asian policy.

Ganghwa Island Incident

Saigō Takamori's proposal to launch a punitive expedition against Korea was defeated by Iwakura Tomomi and his confederates, whose response was, "Dispatching an emissary to Korea would be premature, as our domestic affairs are not yet in order and there are frequent disputes with Russia over Karafuto (Sakhalin)."[10] As the events that ensued (the departure of Saigō and his sympathizers from the imperial court in protest) are well known, I will not discuss them here. However, an unforeseen incident led to the resolution of the Korean problem, for the time being at any rate.

[10] Kawamichi Rintarō, *Saigō "seikanron" no shinsō: rekishika no kyokō wo tadasu* (The truth about Saigō's advocacy of a punitive expedition against Korea: correcting historians' fiction with fact) (Tokyo: Bensei Shuppan, 2014).

The Japanese battleship *Un'yō*, on a mission to explore sea routes on the west coast of Korea, approached Ganghwa Island on September 20, 1875. Its captain had planned to request drinking water, but was greeted by sudden, intense shelling from a fort on the island.

Since the Korean government had been given a Japanese flag, *Un'yō* Captain Inoue Yoshika hoisted his flag on the mast, but the Koreans continued to fire at the Japanese. The *Un'yō* counterattacked and sent a landing party ashore, which captured the fort and confiscated the guns. The battleship then returned to Nagasaki.

News of the incident was met with an outcry when it reached the Japanese government. Officials proposed sending an emissary to confront the Koreans. With everyone in agreement, a decision was made to dispatch Kuroda Kiyotaka, head of the Hokkaido Development Commission, having invested him with full powers. In February 1876 a Japanese delegation went to the Ganghwa government office, where they discussed Korea's rejection of Japanese diplomatic messages and the assault on the *Un'yō* with Korean officials (also with full powers). The Koreans offered a variety of excuses, but in the end, agreed to establish diplomatic relations with Japan and, on February 27, the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1876 was concluded. This was Korea's first treaty with a foreign nation. Incidentally, when Saigō heard of the Japanese Navy's use of force on Ganghwa Island, he was disappointed, saying "What a shameful manner in which to treat friends!"[11]

Korean history books describe the Ganghwa Island Incident as having been deliberately engineered by Japan with aggressive intentions.[12] But historical fact is never so simple. Here I would like to provide a brief explanation of the events that culminated in that incident.

In 1874, the year after those who favored a punitive expedition against Korea were outnumbered by their opponents, rumors were circulating round Busan: (1) the Daewongun's influence was waning, and (2) King Gojong now controlled the reins of power and was making reforms. It so happens that at just about that time the Japanese government had been planning to send Foreign Ministry Councillor Sō Yoshiaki, who had a long-standing relationship with the Koreans, to Korea to attempt to make some headway with establishing diplomatic relations. First, in June they dispatched Foreign Ministry staff member Moriyama Shigeru to Busan to assess the political situation.

Moriyama negotiated with Korean advisers at the Japanese Pavilion in Choryang. For the first time, the Koreans officially recognized and received a Japanese Foreign Ministry staff member. In September, the Koreans told Moriyama they would approve the Japanese proposal stating that Japan wanted to make peace. The Japanese were to send a new diplomatic message, which the Koreans would accept. During the negotiations Moriyama delivered Japanese flags and the naval ensign to the Koreans and asked that an official announcement be made to coastal areas to the effect that Japanese vessels should be protected.

---

[11] Kawamichi, *op. cit.*

[12] One of many similar accounts appears in (Yi Ki-baek) Lee Ki-baik, *New History of Korea*, trans. Edward W. Wagner (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984).

Thus, it seemed as though diplomatic relations between the two nations would, at long last, become a reality. In October Moriyama returned to Japan and submitted his report. In February of 1875 he returned to Korea, this time as an attaché, bearing letters from the foreign minister and the councillor. He requested a reply, but the Koreans reneged on their previous promises and, even more astonishingly, voiced objections to the fact that the Japanese delegation had traveled on a steamship and that its members had entered the banquet hall through the main gate in formal Western-style dress; the Koreans refused to negotiate. They had previously demonstrated their fixation on tradition, but this was taking things to the extreme. This about-face in the Korean stance occurred because the Daewongun and his cronies had regained their position of power, returned to the royal palace, and were bolstering the exclusionist policies of the Korean court.

Moriyama berated the Koreans for their betrayal and breach of promise, but to no avail. There was almost no hope of resolving the problem through an exchange of letters. Even at the Korean court, the King and Queen Min seemed anxious to avoid a confrontation with Japan, and though they seemed somewhat willing to compromise over dress regulations and the format of official letters, the overweening stance remained uncompromisingly exclusionist.

In June the Koreans announced that interchange with Japan would be handled in the old way, and that not only dress code, but also any approach that broke with tradition would not be countenanced. Consequently, Moriyama was unable to submit the letter from the Foreign Minister, and the agreement reached the previous September could not go into force. On September 20, Moriyama received orders to return home; he departed on the following day, but the Ganghwa Incident erupted on the very day he received those orders.

Biased textbooks distort history

I have already described the facts about the Ganghwa Island Incident and the resulting Japan-Korea Treaty of 1876. Article I of the treaty proclaims that Korea is an independent state. Articles IV and V state that, in addition to Busan, two additional ports will be opened up for commercial purposes. Article X grants Japan consular jurisdiction in Korean ports that have been designated for commercial intercourse. Consular jurisdiction (also known as extraterritoriality) means that if a Japanese resident commits a crime against a Korean, the Japanese consul will pass judgment on the case.[13]

At first glance this might seem like an unequal treaty. However, during the Tokugawa era, any Japanese who committed a crime in Korea was handed over to the administrator of the Japanese Pavilion. The administrator would mete out a punishment according to the criminal's social class, or have the criminal transported to Tsushima, where the *daimyō* would decide the criminal's fate in accordance with laws and regulations prevailing in Tsushima. In fact, even before the restoration, Japan had enjoyed extraterritoriality in Korea for many years. The stipulations in the 1876 treaty were simply a matter of codifying customs that had endured for many years. For that reason, the Koreans deemed consular jurisdiction to be fair, and accepted it without argument.

[13] https://worldjpn.grips.ac.jp/documents/texts/pw/18760226.T1E.html (retrieved 8/2022).

The Japan-Korea Treaty of 1876 permitted Japan to establish a legation in Seoul and restored, at least temporarily, diplomatic relations between the two nations, which had ceased since the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate.

Readers may wonder why I have devoted so much space to the Ganghwa Island Incident and the 1876 treaty. They will understand once they have read the following account of the incident from a history textbook.

> In 1868 the Japanese government, seeking to reestablish diplomatic relations with Korea, took the upper hand. However, the Koreans wanted the relationship between the two nations to remain as it had been in the past, and clung to its isolationist policies. Within the Japanese government, some elements advocated a punitive expedition against Korea. Subsequently, when the Ganghwa Island Incident occurred in September 1875, Japan adopted an unyielding stance, and in February of 1876 forced the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1876 on the Koreans. The treaty stated that Korea was an independent state that enjoyed the same rights as Japan. But in compelling Korea to open its doors and to agree to consular jurisdiction, Japan was imposing an unequal treaty on Korea, the same type of agreement that Japan itself had signed with the Western powers.[14]

This account appears in *Sanseidō Japanese History*. Accounts of the incident in other textbooks are virtually the same. Some of them add that the incident was the first phase of Japanese advancement into the Asian continent. I think readers will view this account seems overly simplistic and arbitrary.

It would have us believe that the 1876 treaty was an unfair agreement that the Japanese, spurred by their determination to make inroads into Asia, forced the Koreans to sign under the threat of military action. To maintain that the treaty had its footing in aggressive aims is to parrot the content of Korean history textbooks.

It is indeed disappointing that the Ganghwa Island Incident could not be resolved without a military confrontation. But it is important to remember that prior to the incident, for nine long years beginning with the first year of the Meiji era, the Japanese explained the renovation that had occurred in Japan time and again, and proposed establishing diplomatic relations time and again, only to reach an impasse because of Korean isolationism and conservatism. Biased accounts in a history textbook — accounts that omit pertinent events — do not represent history in its true form. As I have demonstrated, the course of events was far too complicated to place responsibility on Japan and Japan alone.

[14] Inagaki Yasuhiko *et al.*, *Sanseidō Nihon shi santeiban* (Sanseidō Japanese history, third edition) (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1985); first edition appeared in 1981.

3. KOREA: CAUGHT BETWEEN PROGRESS AND SUBSERVIENCE

The Imo Incident

Now I shall describe how the Japanese-Korean relationship unfolded subsequent to the Ganghwa Island Incident. After diplomatic relations had been established, the influence of the Daewongun and his old-guard followers was waning, while that of Queen Min and her fellow progressives was on the rise. Eager for Korea to modernize as Japan was doing, the queen sent a sizable delegation to Japan in 1881. The Koreans, determined to accomplish military reforms, asked Sub-Lt. Horimoto Reizō, a Japanese Army engineer, to help them build a modern army between the end of that year and spring of the following year.

The old guard, particularly soldiers dismissed during the military reforms, resented this progressive trend. In July 1882 the delivery of those soldiers' salaries (in the form of rice) was delayed, and an uprising ensued. Seizing upon this opportunity, the Daewongun encouraged the mutineers. Joined by rioting civilians, they murdered a great many Japanese and stormed the Japanese legation. They then broke into the palace and killed some of the queen's chief retainers, as well as Sub-Lt. Horimoto, though the queen somehow managed to escape with her life. China sent approximately 5,000 troops to Korea to quell the uprising. The Chinese kidnapped the Daewongun and took him to Baoding, where he was detained. The uprising came to be known as the Imo Incident.

As a means of settling the incident, the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1882 was concluded on August 30. The Koreans agreed to punish the wrongdoers severely, to pay Japan indemnity amounting to ¥500,000, to accept the stationing of Japanese soldiers in Seoul to guard the Japanese legation there, and to send an envoy to Japan to apologize.[15] The ringleaders of the uprising were punished, the queen returned to the palace, and the anti-appeasement stelae installed by the Daewongun were removed. In October a Korean delegation headed by special envoy Pak Yong-hyo traveled to Japan, where an apology was offered, thus settling the incident. The Koreans had agreed to pay the ¥500,000 in reparations over a period of five years, but later asked for permission to pay it over 10 years; the Japanese agreed. It is noteworthy to mention that in 1889, after the Koreans had submitted two payments of ¥50,000 each in 1887 and 1888, the Japanese government forgave the remainder (¥400,000), so that the Koreans could use it to make domestic reforms. They also gave the Koreans a steam launch and two mountain guns.

Toadying to China

The Imo Incident provided an excellent opportunity for the Chinese to gain control of Korea. In its aftermath 3,000 Chinese troops remained in Korea, where they oversaw Queen Min's rebuilding of the Korean government. In the meantime, the queen abandoned her plans to emulate Japanese reforms, instead espousing sycophancy to China (*sadaejuui* in Korean), choosing policies that were China-dependent. She remodeled the Korean government bureaucracy after the Chinese system. At China's prompting, the two nations signed the China-Korea Treaty of 1882, which reinforced the suzerainty relationship, with China as the suzerain and Korea, the tributary state. It

[15] https://worldjpn.grips.ac.jp/documents/texts/pw/18820830.T1J.html (in Japanese) (retrieved 08/22).

gave Chinese, as citizens of the suzerain, the right to reside, conduct business, and travel freely in Korea. Appointed as diplomatic advisers were Ma Xiangbo, a Chinese, and Paul Möllendorf, a German recommended by the Chinese. Korea's modern military units were placed in the jurisdiction of the commander in chief of the Chinese troops stationed in Korea.

China had now gained control of Korean military and military affairs. But the Chinese were still not satisfied. To prevent the Japanese from acquiring any advantage in Korea, they directed Korea to enter into commercial relationships with the nations of Europe and the US. Pitting one barbarian state against another was a time-honored Chinese diplomatic artifice. Between 1882 and 1884 Korea signed commercial treaties with the US, the UK, Germany, Italy, Russia, and France.

With the conclusion of the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1876, Korea had opened its doors to the world. Normally, events like this would have provided the impetus for modernization, but a combination of China's resistance to modernization and Korea's own conservatism delayed the modernization process for quite some time.

Japan supports Korean Enlightenment Party

Any discussion of Korean independence activists necessarily includes Kim Ok-gyun and Pak Yong-hyo. As already stated, Pak was part of the Korean delegation that traveled to Japan after the Imo Incident to apologize. Kim Ok-gyun, who later formed strong ties with Japan, was another member of the party. Unlike the Conservative Party, which relied heavily on China, Pak and Kim were members of the Enlightenment Party, which had chosen Japan's modernization as its model. Its objectives were the achievement of modernization and independence for Korea.

Pak and Kim approached prominent Japanese reformer Fukuzawa Yukichi, and asked him for guidance. Fukuzawa lectured them on the significance of independence and suggested that they establish a school specializing in Western learning as a way to nurture the human intellect; he also advised them to publish a newspaper. This is precisely what Fukuzawa had done in Japan, but would have been extremely difficult to accomplish in Korea. However, Inoue Kakugorō, one of Fukuzawa's disciples, had been invited to advise the Korean government. He established the Office of Culture and Information, which edited and published the Hanseong Weekly Bulletin. Its inaugural issue appeared in November 1883. It was Korea's first newspaper.

Upon Fukuzawa's recommendation, Kim Ok-gyun arranged for more than 40 Koreans to study in Japan in early 1883. Half of them enrolled in the Toyama Army Academy and the other half in vocational schools. Later Japanese teachers helped them acquire knowledge needed to support military and industrial modernization in Korea. During this period, the Korean Enlightenment Party depended on Japan for support, and Japan spared no effort in guiding and educating them.

Korean reform attempts fail: Gapsin Coup

But because of Queen Min's enmity of the Enlightenment Party, its members never received appointments to important government posts. Therefore, their plans for modernizing Korea made less progress than they had hoped. Such was the situation in December 1884, when China was defeated in the Sino-French War. The Enlightenment Party took advantage of this opportunity by attempting to rid Korea of the Conservative Party. On December 4, with support from Japan, Kim

Ok-gyun and Pak Yong-hyo staged a coup d'état at a banquet celebrating the establishment of a national post office. Enlightenment Party members killed several leading members of the rival Conservative Party and established a new government on December 5. On December 6 they announced a 14-point political-reform program. Some of the important points were: (1) abolition of tribute and empty formalities, (2) abolition of aristocratic descent groups, (3) abolition of eunuchs, (4) establishment of a police force to prevent thefts, and (5) establishment of a royal bodyguard.

However, under the advice of Chinese military advisor Yuan Shikai, the Conservative Party asked China to send troops to Korea. The elite Chinese troops invaded the palace, and the coup was reversed. During the turmoil the Japanese legation was burned down, and a great many Japanese residents, including women, were massacred. This chain of events is referred to as the Gapsin Coup. In defeat, Kim Ok-gyun, Pak Yong-hyo, and other key members of the Enlightenment Party sought refuge in Japan.

The coup was a conflict between Japan and China; it was ultimately settled with the Convention of Tsientsin (Tianjin), concluded in April of the following year (1885). The treaty was signed and sealed by Ito Hirobumi, representing Japan, and Li Hongzhang, representing China. The real beneficiaries of this conflict were the Western powers, especially Russia. Ito signed the treaty because he knew that Japan and China needed to work in close cooperation if further advances of those powers were to be forestalled.

According to the convention,

(1) Both Japan and China would withdraw their troops from Korea within four months.
(2) Korea would be responsible for training its troops and maintaining public order. A third-party nation would train the Korean troops; neither Japan nor China would participate in such training.
(3) If Japan or China were to send troops due to unrest in Korea, the nation sending troops was obligated to notify the other in writing before the fact, and withdraw those troops as soon as the unrest was quelled.[16]

Both Japan and China removed their troops from Korea in accordance with the convention (however, reports have it that the terms of the treaty notwithstanding, the Chinese secretly kept more than 200 soldiers in Seoul). Still, Korea had certainly not achieved independence. Yuan Shikai was ensconced in Seoul, having been appointed Chinese Plenipotentiary. Besides putting pressure on Korea and interfering in its affairs, by establishing a Chinatown in Seoul he protected Chinese merchants but oppressed Japanese and Korean tradesmen.

Russian encroachment commences

After the abortive Enlightenment Party coup, the Chinese were partially successful in blocking Japanese inroads into Korea. However, they were now faced with a new threat that had materialized in Korea, namely Russia. In its determination to restrain Japan, China had created this

[16] https://worldjpn.grips.ac.jp/documents/texts/pw/18850418.T1E.html (retrieved 08/2022).

particular threat by turning Korea into a lamb ready to be devoured by the Western wolves. Now the Chinese tactic of pitting one barbarian state against another was beginning to backfire. China has adopted foolish plans that wreaked havoc on the Far Eastern political situation too many times to enumerate, and this was certainly one of them.

After Russia signed the Russia-Korea Treaty of 1884, a commercial pact, Karl Ivanovich Weber became Russian ambassador to Korea. Weber soon used ingenious methods to ingratiate himself with the Korean court, and succeeded in expanding Russian influence there. At the same time, after the Convention of Tsientsin was concluded, the Chinese intensified their interference in Korean domestic affairs, as already stated, which caused the Conservative Party to turn against them, and turn toward Russia, contrary to Chinese designs.

To suppress the pro-Russia ambience in the Korean court, the Chinese allowed the Daewongun, whom they had been holding in custody, to return to Korea in 1885. They also seized control of Korean customs affairs. Moreover, when diplomatic advisers like Möllendorf began to lean toward Russia, the Chinese dismissed them one after another. Although China had compelled Korea to sign treaties with the Western powers, it made every effort to protect its suzerain status, for example, by obstructing Korean attempts to dispatch envoys to those nations in 1887, a striking inconsistency.

The UK, as well as China, sensed the new threat from Russia. At that time, the British were enmeshed in border wars with the Russians in Afghanistan. They also needed to halt the progress of Russian encroachment in the Far East (the Russians were advancing southward, threatening China and Korea). In April 1885, without warning, a British fleet occupied Geomun Island, a critical passage for Russia's Pacific Fleet, located on the southern tip of Korea. Startled by the UK's bold move, the Russians issued a protest through China and Korea, and announced that if the British continued to occupy Geomun Island, they would occupy part of the Korean peninsula. After negotiations that dragged on for two years, China convinced the Russians to promise not to occupy any part of Korea whatsoever. By way of guarantee, the British fleet withdrew from Geomun Island in 1887. The British occupation of that island shows clearly how great a threat Russian encroachment posed to the Far East. Moreover, Korea's inability to deal effectively with intrusion from and disputes with third-party nations indicated the complexity and tragic nature of the Korean problem.

Korea's tendency to lean on Russia continued to grow. In 1888 the Russia-Korea Commercial Convention was signed. As a result, in 1889, Kyonghung in northeastern Korea opened up to trade in 1889, and a Russian concession was established there. Additionally, Korea allowed Russians free passage along the Tumen River. This was the same tactic used 30 years earlier, when Russia concluded the Treaty of Aigun with China. This gave the Russians the right to navigate the inland waters of the Amur and Ussuri rivers, and paved the way for incursions into Manchuria.

Fifteen years prior to that, Saigō, nursing his wounds after failing to win support for a punitive expedition against Korea, made the following remarks to Suge Sanehide, a chief retainer of Shōnai domain (today Yamagata prefecture). Suge had traveled to Kagoshima to pay him a visit: "Eventually Russia will attack Japan, coming by way of Manchuria and Korea. This will be the

second Mongol invasion, and Japan's survival will be at stake." But the scenario that could realize Saigō's greatest fear was already materializing in Korea.

4. STATE WITH LITTLE DESIRE FOR INDEPENDENCE

Kim Ok-gyun: sustained or manipulated?

As I have already mentioned, Kim Ok-gyun, one of the leaders of Korea's Enlightenment Party, failed in his attempt to stage a coup d'état (the Gapsin Coup), and fled to Japan with Pak Yong-hyo and other comrades. I would like to recount a bit more of Kim's story.

Again and again, the Korean government demanded that Japan arrest and extradite Enlightenment Party members. However, the Japanese government considered them political refugees and refused to send them back to Korea. At first Kim was transported to Chichijima in the Ogasawara archipelago, but found life on an isolated island monotonous and asked to be accommodated elsewhere. The government moved him to Hokkaido.

While Kim was living on Chichijima, Kurushima Tsuneki[17] of Gen'yōsha (the Black Ocean Society, a Pan-Asianist organization) and other Japanese intellectuals made the long trip to Ogasawara to console Kim and keep him company. When Kim arrived in Hokkaido, he received the good offices of relatives of Hokkaido Agency Director Nagayama Takeshirō and others. Kim was ostensibly living in Hokkaido, but he spent a good part of his time in Tokyo.

The Japanese government gave the political asylum-seekers from Korea a monthly stipend of ¥15 while they lived on Chichijima, and ¥50 after they moved to Hokkaido. Since a civil servant's starting salary was ¥30 at that time, this was a very generous amount. In any case, it was a rare government that paid a monthly salary to political refugees.

In 1890 Kim was permitted to reside in Tokyo, where he enjoyed staunch support from, and the company of, distinguished government officials and private citizens like Inoue Kaoru, Gotō Shōjirō, Inukai Tsuyoshi, and Tōyama Mitsuru.

However, at about the same time, assassins sent by the Korean government began to stalk the refugees. In March 1894, over the objections of Tōyama and other partisans, Kim was lured to Shanghai. On March 27, the day after his arrival there, he was shot to death by Hong Jong-u, one of his traveling companions.

Kim's body was loaded onto a Chinese warship and taken to Korea. The Korean government proceeded to dismember the corpse, severing the head, arms, and legs from the trunk (disememberment was one form of capital punishment used in Korea at the time). The head and extremities were put on display for several days, and then paraded around all eight provinces. The

[17] Kurushima later opposed Foreign Minister Ōkuma Shigenobu's decision to extend the terms of unequal treaties with Western nations; he tossed a bomb into Ōkuma's carriage and then took his own life. Ōkuma survived.

torso was thrown into the Han River. Kim's father was executed, his younger brother died in prison, and his grief-stricken mother committed suicide.

Given that Kim's remains were taken to Korea aboard the *Weijing*, a Chinese vessel, and that Li Hongzhang sent a telegram to the Korean king congratulating him on Kim's assassination, it is safe to assume that Li was involved in the plot to kill Kim. Fukuzawa Yukichi expressed the feelings of the Japanese people about Kim's murder: "I cannot forgive the actions of the Chinese," adding his fears that "from now on the Japanese will be even more suspicious of Korea and China." As Fukuzawa feared, once the news about the Korean government's abuse of Kim's corpse and China's praise of the assassination and its perpetrator became known, the Japanese public was indignant. Kim Ok-gyun's funeral was held on May 20 at Asakusa Hongan Temple. It was a magnificent, solemn ceremony attended by Kim's friends and acquaintances.

Kim's grave is located at Shinjo Temple in Hongō, Tokyo. Kim's friend, photographer Kai Gunji, retrieved some of Kim's hair from the gibbet and brought it back to Japan; it was buried in Kim's grave. The splendid gravestone is more than 2m high, and on its face is incised "Grave of Kim Ok-gyun of Korea" in large block characters.

Next to it is a smaller gravestone belonging to Kai Gunji. Kim's gravestone is larger than the graves of Japanese within the temple precincts. Gravestones as imposing as his are unusual in Japan.

Once, during a debate with a Korean historian about the history shared by Japan and Korea, I suggested that Kim's grave "tells the story of the hopes of Japanese patriots and some Koreans for Pan-Asianism." The Korean historian's rebuttal? "No, it tells us that Kim Ok-gyun was someone who could be manipulated."[18]

Japanese of good will enthusiastically befriended and supported Kim Ok-gyun precisely because they had grand goals: first, an independent Korea, and if at all possible, an Asian revival in which Japan, Korea, and China would join together and lead an effort to counter the Western colonizers' stranglehold. The Japanese supported Kim because they viewed him as a comrade in their quest for Pan-Asianism. Those who claim that the Japanese manipulated him prove only that they are ignorant of a concept that was an important historical theme at the time.

Korea was a hotbed of domestic discord then, thanks in no small part to the conservatives, who seemed to have lost interest in the pursuit of independence. The Japanese, in their recognition that bringing about reforms in Korea was the necessary first step toward an Asian revival, were certainly not mistaken.

[18] Nakamura Akira, "激突！日韓大討論" (Confrontation! Great debate between Japan and Korea) *Bungei shunju*, December 1986.

The Japanese say that they sustained Kim Ok-gyun, while the Koreans say that we manipulated him. These disparate locutions perfectly reflect the difference between Japanese and Korean historical awareness.

Abandoning Asia: bidding farewell to bad company

It was March 1885, not long after the Gapsin Coup, when Fukuzawa Yukichi's "Argument in Favor of Abandoning Asia" appeared in *Jiji shinpō* (Current events). An excerpt follows:

> When our thoughts turn to Japan's foreign policy, we must realize that Japan does not have the time to wait for China and Korea to acquire modern civilization to the extent where Japan can join with them in encouraging the growth of Asia. Instead, Japan should separate itself from its declining neighbors and cast its fate with the enlightened nations of the West. There is no need to afford special consideration to China and Korea simply because they are our neighbors. We should treat them as the Western nations do. If we prolong amicable relations with bad company, we shall ultimately be compelled to share their dishonor. I hereby sever my ties with our disreputable Asian friends.[19]

This is Fukuzawa's resolute announcement stating that he is parting ways with China and Korea. The Gapsin Coup had prompted him to write uncompromising editorials destined for *Jiji shinpō* advocating war against China. They were often blocked by censors, who in fact sometimes threatened to rescind *Jiji shinpō*'s publication rights. However, when the incident was settled with the Convention of Tsientsin, and Japan seemed to have washed its hands of Korea for the most part, Fukuzawa was unhappy. Not long thereafter, when the British occupied Geomun Island, Fukuzawa published an editorial bearing the title "Congratulations to the Korean People on the Ruin of Their Country." As a result, he was ordered to shut down *Jiji shinpō*, a bitter experience for him.

This was the same Fukuzawa who, after the Imo Incident, was so generous with guidance and support for the modernization of Korea through members of the Enlightenment Party. And it was the same Fukuzawa who said, "I am completely sympathetic with the Korean people." Then why did he do an about-face and launch invective against Korea?

It must have been the rigorous standards of independence and self-respect Fukuzawa applied to individuals and nations that prompted him to desert China and Korea. He certainly believed it was necessary to protect Japan's independence by halting the rapid advances of Europe and the US on Asia, and by exhorting Japan's neighbors to modernize and gain independence. In Fukuzawa's eyes, it was not enough for only Japan to be independent. He explained his thoughts using a fire-prevention analogy.

> Let us turn our thoughts to preventing fires. Suppose I dwell in a stone house, but my neighbor's house is a ramshackle wooden building. Is my mind at ease? No, surely not, because if I wish to ensure that a fire will not spread to my house, I must

[19] Fukuzawa Yukichi, "Datsu-A ron" (Argument in favor of abandoning Asia), *Jiji shinpō* (Current affairs), March 1885.

> support my neighbor by speaking to him and convincing him to build a stone house exactly like mine. Or if the circumstances are right, I might build one for him. I would do so not out of affection for my neighbor, nor out of dislike, but because of my fear that fire might spread to my house.[20]

A clear-cut statement, if there ever was one. But given the situation, there was no choice; survival was at stake. This was Meiji Japan's desperate journey toward the ability to defend itself, toward greater strength, toward independence. It is this sense of urgency that gave rise to slogans like "enrich the nation, strengthen the military," "civilization and enlightenment," and "promote industry."

Fukuzawa wrote, "Those who lack the will to gain independence do not truly love their country."[21] He must have believed that a people without a strong desire for independence would never rouse their compatriots to take part in a struggle for it.

I am aware of critics who maintain that Fukuzawa was contemptuous of Asia, and link his remark with the ideology of aggression and imperialism. Yes, it is true that when we read his harsh criticism of China and Korea in "Abandoning Asia," it is easy to point out the absence of the spirit of universal brotherhood or love for his neighbors. But Fukuzawa was not a Utopian pacifist. He was a realist and an ardent advocate of independence. In the face of the aforementioned criticism, he provided an answer:

> You may hear pronouncements like the following: "Our responsibility as members of the human race goes beyond winning independence for our country and only our country. We must set our sights on other noble, eternal objectives." Those who speak these words are, of course, right. However, given the state of the world today, it is too soon to discuss lofty aspirations in connection with interchange among nations.[21]

Fukuzawa had no use for irresponsible, empty arguments. He disliked vague debates that veered away from the situation at hand. For that reason, the moment he realized that, given the situation in China and Korea for the previous 20 years, it would be impossible to rescue them, he decided that the only hope for the survival of his beloved country, Japan, was to bid farewell to "bad company" and go it alone.

I have already described the bad company. There was arrogant China, convinced that it was the center of the world, and determined to keep Korea in its clutches. Then there was conservative Korea, ever vacillating between submission and rebellion, where squabbling between the Daewongun and Queen Min never ceased; the Koreans submitted to China at times, seemed partial to Japan at others, and welcomed Russia at still others. If Japan continued to associate with neighboring states that did not hunger for civilization and refused to understand the importance of

---

[20] Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Jiji shōgen* (Commentary on current affairs). September 1881.

[21] Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Outline of a theory of civilization*, trans. David A. Dilworth and G. Cameron Hurst (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

independence, it would soon join them in ruin. Unsurprisingly, Fukuzawa shunned such a fate. We must keep all these factors in mind when we read "Abandoning Asia."

Those who attempt to use "Abandoning Asia" to justify claims that subsequent Japanese continental policy was aggressive and imperialistic are laboring under a fantasy that disregards the historical situation described in that editorial. Japanese continental policy subsequent to the 1st Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War was driven by the reality and logic of international political dynamics, which had changed since 1885. To hold Fukuzawa responsible is to espouse a false doctrine that loses sight of the unpredictability of historical development.

CHAPTER 2: THE 1ST SINO-JAPANESE WAR

1. OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES AND COURSE OF THE CONFLICT

China sends troops to quell Donghak Peasant Revolution

China perceived Korea as a vassal state; Japan regarded Korea as an autonomous nation. Japan refused to accept China's claims of suzerainty and strived to remove the Chinese military presence from the Korean peninsula. Was there not some means to dispel the dense clouds hovering over Korea short of warfare between Japan and China?

The Donghak Peasant Revolution, the principal cause of the 1st Sino-Japanese War, was a peasant revolt that evolved into a political rampage. The revolution was, in essence, a domestic Korean problem. And that problem was complicated by the fact that the Donghak Party colluded with the Daewongun (who was desperate for an opportunity to displace Queen Min and her followers) and also with Yuan Shikai, the Chinese plenipotentiary.

The Chinese were unhappy that Russian Consul Weber's diplomatic prowess had enabled him to infiltrate the Korean court. Once again, they interfered in Korean affairs. Hoping to install a Conservative Party government, they secretly goaded the Donghak Party. As the Japanese had gotten wind of the behind-the-scenes Chinese machinations, they did not dare stand by and watch the revolution play out.

The Chinese were the first to send troops to Korea, on June 12, 1894. They immediately notified the Japanese, in accordance with the Convention of Tsientsin. But in the notice, the Chinese stated that they were doing so to protect their "vassal state," which contravened the basis of Japan's Korea policy. Japanese Foreign Minister Mutsu Munemitsu immediately protested: "We do not accept China's claim that Korea is its vassal." He then dispatched the same number of men to Korea as China had.

It is common knowledge that, on that occasion, the Japanese had proposed working together with China to reform Korean domestic affairs. Some historians claim that proposal was nothing but an excuse to commence hostilities. However, this point of view is embraced only by those who wish to portray Japan at all costs as a belligerent nation. At the heart of the Korean problem were corrupt politics and a backward society. That being the case, it made perfect sense for the Japanese to propose domestic reforms as a first step toward a solution.

The Chinese and Japanese had to break the deadlock over Korea, or Sino-Japanese relations would collapse. Mutsu was correct when he wrote the following.

> I came to think that Japan must use Korean domestic reform as a barometer, knowing that the consequence would be either a deluge that would dispel the dense clouds, or a cloudless sky.[1]

[1] Mutsu Munemitsu, *Kenkenroku: A Diplomatic Record of the Sino-Japanese War*, 1894-1895, ed. and trans. Gordon Mark Berger (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983).

In terms of historical reality, it makes much more sense to interpret the above not as an excuse to go to war, but a proposal for domestic reform made in the faint hope that hostilities could be avoided.

"Japan seems to be very kindly disposed toward Korea"

What were the thoughts of a high-ranking foreign official stationed in the Far East about this situation?

Payson J. Treat, an American authority on Far Eastern diplomatic history, issued the following report.

> It is interesting to note how the views of the three American representatives were influenced by their environment. Mr. Denby, Chargé at Peking, reported, on June 26, that "the action of Japan is criticized here as hasty and unduly bellicose." Mr. [John M.B.] Sill wrote, on the 29th, from Seoul: "I may add that Japan seems to be very kindly disposed toward Korea. She seems only to desire, once for all, to throw off the yoke of Chinese suzerainty, and then to assist her weak neighbor in strengthening her position as an independent state, by aiding her in such reforms as shall bring peace, prosperity, and enlightenment to her people, a motive which pleases many Korean officials of the more intelligent sort, and one which I imagine may not meet with disapproval in America."[2]

Treat adds, "And Mr. [Edwin] Dun, at Tokyo, accepted the sincerity of Japan's motives."

This report indicates that the American envoy in Korea, having first-hand knowledge of the situation there, was more conversant with Japanese actions in Korea than his counterpart in China.

Korea's status as vassal of China ends

Japan dispatched Ōshima Keisuke to Korea on June 26 to urge King Gojong to institute domestic reforms. Since domestic reforms would involve restructuring the Korean government, China would necessarily lose its hold over Korea. With prompting from Yuan Shikai, the Korean government voiced strenuous opposition.

On July 3 Ōshima presented to the Koreans a five-page domestic reform proposal consisting of 26 articles. On July 20 he demanded the termination of the Chinese suzerainty and the withdrawal of Chinese troops, directing the Koreans to respond by July 22. (Once Yuan Shikai, who had been advocating policies that kept Korea under China's thumb, got wind of Japan's stringent policy demands, he secretly slipped out of Seoul, ending up in Tianjin on July 18.) The Korean government conferred with Tang Shaoyi, the diplomat who inherited Yuan's position, and submitted a stopgap reply. But Ōshima found it unacceptable, and warned the Koreans that he would take military action if he did not receive a satisfactory response. On July 23 the Japanese

[2] Payson J. Treat, *Japan and the United States: 1853-1921* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1921), 154.

military expelled Korean soldiers from Gyeongbok Palace. Queen Min and her family members fled, and the Daewongun, who had distanced himself from the court for quite some time, agreed to head the government upon Ōshima's request.

One of the first actions the Daewongun took was to announce the termination of the suzerainty relationship with China on July 25, and demand that Chinese troops stationed in Asan, to the north of Seoul, withdraw from Korea. He also was quick to start work on domestic reforms, the most challenging task for Korea, which I will discuss later.

Japanese triumph on land and sea

First, I would like to provide a summary of the course of the war.

On July 25, 1894, the Japanese and Chinese navies engaged in hostilities off Pung Island, on the west coast of Korea. The Japanese soundly defeated the Chinese fleet. On the same day the famous *Kowshing* Incident occurred. I will write more about the Battle of Pung Island later.

On July 29, Japanese forces defeated the Chinese in a land battle at Seonghwan, Korea, and occupied Asan. On July 31 the Chinese Foreign Ministry notified Komura Jutarō, a Japanese diplomat serving in China, that China was severing diplomatic relations with Japan. On August 1 both Japan and China issued declarations of war.

The Japanese declaration describes how Japanese attempts to help Korea gain independence were stymied time and again by Chinese trickery.

> Korea is an independent state. She was first introduced into the family of nations by the advice and guidance of Japan. It has, however, been China's habit to designate Korea as her dependency, and both openly and secretly to interfere with her domestic affairs.
> (…)
> Thereupon Japan advised Korea to reform her administration so that order and tranquillity might be preserved at home, and so that the country might be able to discharge the responsibilities and duties of an independent state abroad. Korea has already consented to undertake the task. But China has secretly and insidiously endeavoured to circumvent and to thwart Japan's purpose.[3]

The Chinese declaration reiterates the Chinese position.

> Korea has been our tributary for the past two hundred odd years. She has given us tribute all this time, which is a matter known to the world.[4]

The two stances reflect the conflict between the progressives and conservatives.

---

[3] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Sino-Japanese_War (retrieved 9/22).

[4] *Ibid.*

Political strife in Japan, which had lasted for a full four years after the Meiji Constitution was promulgated, had subsided by the time the Imperial Rescript declaring war was issued. Japanese public opinion was wholeheartedly and unanimously in favor of going to war with China. The Chinese conviction that the Japanese were too preoccupied with domestic problems to engage in a foreign war turned out to be a gross miscalculation.

When the declarations of war came out, the Chinese turned to Pyongyang, hoping to prevent the Japanese from proceeding northward. But the Japanese attacked them from all directions, and on the evening of September 15, the Chinese suddenly raised a white flag outside their fortress, indicating their desire to surrender. However, this gesture turned out to be a ruse, an attempt to buy time and weaken the attack. That night the Chinese abandoned their fortress under cover of darkness. The Japanese occupied Pyongyang on September 16, and proudly hoisted the Japanese flag atop the captured fortress.

On September 17, the Japanese vanquished the Beiyang Fleet in the Yellow Sea.

In early October Japan's First Army, commanded by Gen. Yamagata Aritomo, crossed the Yalu River into Manchuria, and near the end of the month conquered Jiulian and Fenghuang. The Second Army, commanded by Gen. Ōyama Iwao, landed at Huayuankou on Liaodong peninsula and captured Jinzhou and Dalian Bay on October 24, and occupied Lüshun, purported to be impregnable, on November 1.

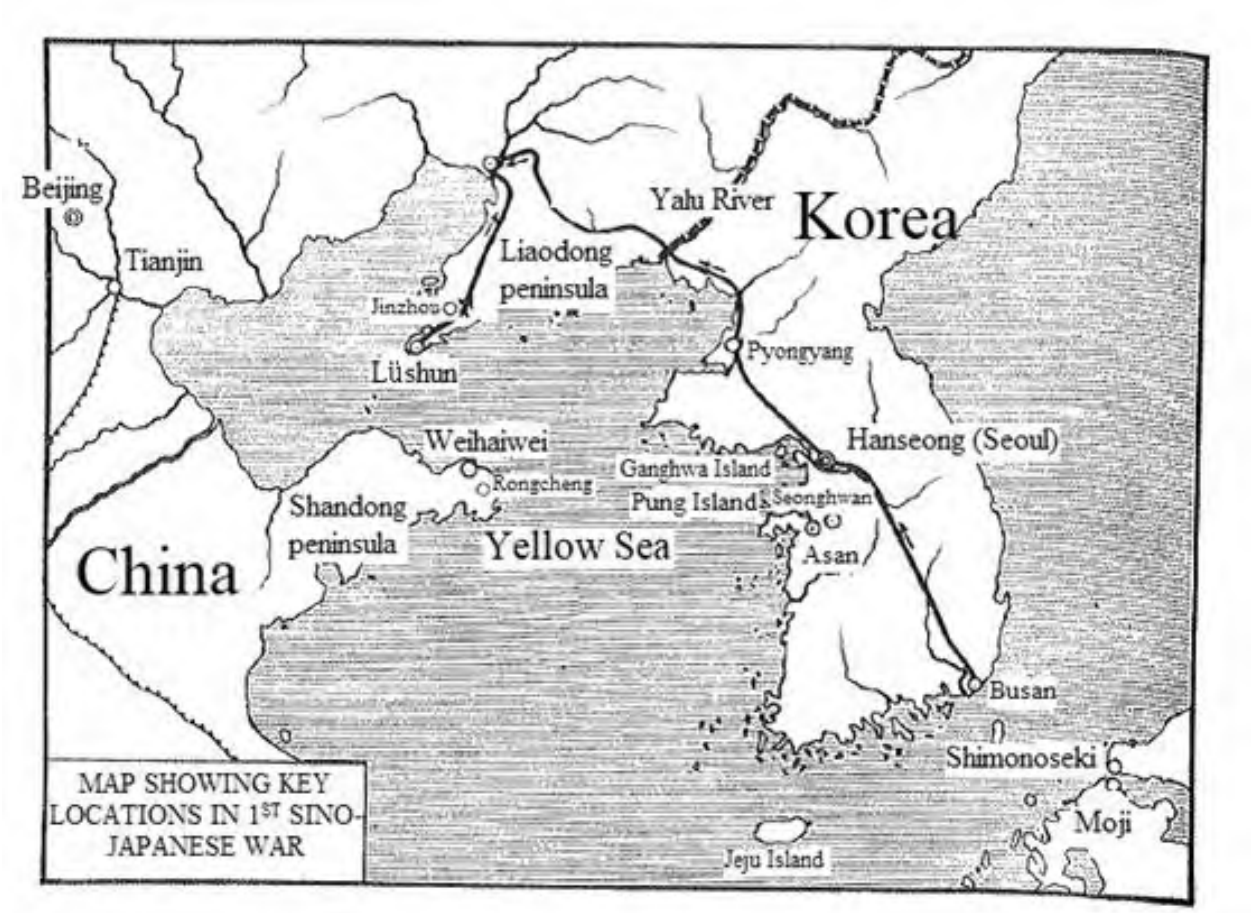
Because the Chinese had assembled the remnants of its fleet at Weihaiwei on the north coast of the Shandong peninsula, the Japanese decided to use a combined land and sea offensive. At the end of January 1895, part of the Second Army landed at Rongcheng Bay on the east coast of the Shandong peninsula, and occupied the battery at Weihaiwei after only one day's fighting. In early February the Navy used torpedoes to sink several Chinese vessels, including the *Dingyuan*, the enemy flagship. Since most of the Beiyang Fleet had been destroyed, Admiral Ding Ruchang, the enemy commander, raised a white flag in surrender on February 12. On February 17 the Japanese occupied Weihaiwei, China's sole military port, and confiscated several ships, including the *Zhenyuan.* With that, the Japanese had annihilated the Beiyang naval units.

Though Japan's victory was now assured, the First Army occupied Yingkou in early March, and then proceeded to defeat 20,000 Chinese troops at Tianzhuangtai. The First and Second armies then marched together to Peking, the capital.

The Chinese had been completely overwhelmed; peacemaking attempts, already in the offing, began in earnest.

The lies in Chinese history textbooks

The Chinese have a habit of issuing formal objections to accounts of historical events in Japanese history textbooks. However, I would like to point out some astonishing Chinese distortions of events that occurred during the 1st Sino-Japanese War.



Chinese History, published by People's Education Press, is a primary school textbook. It includes accounts that describe the Battle of Pung Island, the *Kowshing* Incident, and the Battle of the Yalu River as follows.

(1) Battle of Pung Island; *Kowshing* Incident
On July 25 the Japanese Navy *suddenly attacked a Chinese transport ship* near Pung Island. (…) As a result, a merchant ship transporting soldiers was ambushed and sunk, and the soldiers on board (nearly 1,000 souls) lost their lives. [Italics supplied.]

(2) Battle of the Yalu River
On September 17 the Beiyang Fleet was returning to Lüshun, when it spied ships off in the distance *displaying American flags*. As the 12 vessels came closer, *all of them suddenly lowered the American flags and hoisted Japanese flags*, and proceeded to attack the Beiyang Fleet. Navy Commander / Admiral Ding Ruchang issued the order to return fire. [Italics supplied.]

These accounts could easily serve as models for fabricated history. They do not deserve the dignity of a rebuttal, but I feel the need to set the record straight.

The account in (1) is ostensibly a description of the Battle of Pung Island fought off Asan Bay in Korea. On the morning of July 25, 1894, a flying squadron from Japan's Combined Fleet consisting of three vessels (*Yoshino*, *Akitsushima*, and *Naniwa*) encountered Chinese ships *Jiyuan*

and *Guangyi*. Flagship *Yoshino* prepared to exchange gun salutes and approached the two vessels, but the Chinese not only did not fire a salute, but also aimed their guns in preparation for battle, so Commander Tsuboi Kōzō assumed that the Chinese had already opened hostilities and sailed out to face them. At 7:52, when the opponents were within 3,000m of each other, *Jiyuan* opened fire. *Yoshino* immediately fired back; the other two Japanese ships followed suit. After a few minutes, the Japanese put *Jiyuan* to flight, and *Guangyi* went up in flames after running aground in shallow waters fleeing the Japanese. The claim that the Japanese attacked a Chinese transport ship without warning is, quite simply, a distortion of historical fact intended to portray the Japanese as cowards.

The authors of this textbook have borrowed bits and pieces of the facts of the *Kowshing* Incident to create their own distorted version. Here is what actually transpired.

As the cruiser *Naniwa* was in pursuit of *Jiyuan* on July 25, it encountered *Kowshing*, flying the British flag and crammed with Chinese soldiers. An inspection revealed that the vessel carried 1,200 Chinese troops, 14 guns, and ammunition. Using the ship of a neutral nation (in this case, the UK), to transport soldiers and weapons is in violation of international law in time of war. Therefore, Captain Tōgō Heihachirō issued an order to *Kowshing* to follow the *Naniwa*. The Chinese commander threatened the British captain, and refused to obey the order, even after four hours of negotiations. Left with no other option, Captain Tōgō issued "Danger" and "Abandon Ship" signals to the crew of *Kowshing*, and then sank it.

This incident sparked anti-Japanese propaganda in the UK, but the British Naval Court in Shanghai ruled that the action taken by *Naniwa* was right and proper. Moreover, the distinguished international jurist, Sir Thomas Erskine Holland, in a letter to the Times, wrote that *Naniwa* had acted in full accordance with international law in time of war.[5] The uproar in the UK gradually subsided. *Chinese History* makes no mention of China's violations of international law. In fact, it mentions only that the Japanese attacked and sank *Kowshing*. It is obvious that the authors included only sections that were to their liking.

Even more surprising is the astonishing claim in (2), referring to the Battle of the Yalu River, that the Japanese fleet was flying American flags when it approached the Chinese fleet. Then, all of a sudden, the American flags were lowered, Japanese flags raised in their stead, and the attack on the Chinese ships commenced. I will hazard a guess that no one has ever heard of, much less witnessed, a phenomenon of this sort. It is as if the textbook authors were attempting a parody of the *Kowshing* Incident. One's initial reaction to this invention of history is to burst out laughing, but this absurd drama is apparently officially recognized in China and passes for state-sponsored historical perception there.

[5] Thomas Erskine Holland, *Letters to the Times upon War and Neutrality, 1881-1909: With Some Commentary (1909)* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1914), 41-43.

CHAPTER 2: THE 1ST SINO-JAPANESE WAR

2. CHINESE ATROCITIES

Japan takes the high road: respect for international law

One notable aspect of the 1st Sino-Japanese War was its exposure of the discrepancy between the combatants' views about international law in time of war.

After lowering the curtain on centuries of seclusion, and inaugurating the Meiji Renovation, the Japanese proceeded to modernize domestic law, using Western legal systems as their models. As a result, they were able to make some progress with treaty revision. In July 1894, not long before the commencement of the 1st Sino-Japanese War, they succeeded in removing the extraterritoriality clause from their treaty with the UK.

The Japanese demonstrated great interest in international law as well. As early as 1877, on the occasion of the Satsuma Rebellion, they established the Philanthropic Society, an organization modeled after the European Red Cross and dedicated to aiding sick and wounded soldiers, be they friend or foe. In June 1886 they changed its name to the Japanese Red Cross Society. Emperor Meiji had expressed the hope that Japan would soon become a party to the Red Cross Treaty (formally, the First Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded in Armies in the Field), now that it had become a member of the international community. In April 1887, after Japan had signed the treaty, Minister of War Ōyama Iwao distributed his comments on the convention to his men, and ordered that they be read carefully and considered part of the Japanese military's commitment to prevailing law. Moreover, in October 1886, the same year the Japanese signed the convention, they also became party to the Paris Declaration Respecting Maritime Law.

Thus, even before the 1st Sino-Japanese War commenced, Japan had demonstrated its respect for international laws and regulations. This was an important opportunity to gain the respect of other nations and is precisely why Emperor Meiji, in his imperial rescript declaring war on China, wrote the following.

> We hereby declare war against China, and we command each and all of our competent authorities, in obedience to our wish and with a view to the attainment of the national aim, to carry on hostilities by sea and by land against China, with all the means at their disposal, consistently with the Law of Nations.[1]

Note the Emperor's emphasis on observing the "Law of Nations," which reflected his own sentiments. I have already mentioned that the Japanese military's strict adherence to international law during the *Kowshing* Incident commanded great respect overseas.

[1] Trumbull White, *War in the East: Japan, China, and Corea* (Philadelphia: P.W. Ziegler & Co., 1895);blithlyhttps://www.gutenberg.org/files/55608/55608-h/55608-h.htm (retrieved 09/2022).

Interestingly enough, it is weak or defeated nations that ordinarily advocate strict observance of international law. Powerful or victorious nations tend to blithely disregard it. Soviet violations of the Japan-Soviet Neutrality Pact at the end of World War II and the many atrocities committed against Japanese nationals in Manchuria and Karafuto (Sakhalin) are typical instances of violations perpetrated by the powerful.

But the behavior of Japanese military personnel during the 1st Sino-Japanese War was different. Throughout the conflict the Japanese won victory after victory, yet they adhered faithfully to the principles of international law, and won the praise of at least one French legal scholar, Paul Fauchille, for having done so.

> Facts have demonstrated that the Japanese government knows how to apply the principles of the civilization it has embraced.
>
> (…)
>
> During the Sino-Japanese War, the Japanese faithfully adhered to the principles of international law, despite the fact that their enemy did not.[2]

At the time of the 1st Sino-Japanese War, the Chinese had signed neither the First Geneva Convention nor the Paris Declaration. Chinese behavior was sickeningly barbaric. Chinese commanders ordered their troops to attack and sink any and every Japanese vessel, regardless of type, and placed bounties on the heads of Japanese soldiers. The Chinese killed Japanese civilians residing in China.

International law allows for one belligerent to retaliate if the other violates that law. But the Japanese chose not to exercise that right. For instance, on August 4, soon after hostilities had begun, an imperial order was issued to the effect that the lives and property of Chinese nationals residing in Japan were to be protected.

An upsurge in patriotism prompted a great many Japanese men to volunteer for military service. Emperor Meiji issued a special decree in which he cautioned the impassioned populace. After first commending the volunteers for their earnestness, it advises them as follows: "Our nation possesses established institutions for waging war and our citizens have their customary affairs to conduct … at this juncture there is no need for volunteer soldiers."[3] Compare this with later assaults on Japanese soldiers by unlawful Chinese combatants wearing civilian clothing, a violation of international law.

There are countless examples demonstrating that Japan respected and adhered to international law and civilized practices by, for instance, forbidding privateering and violence, and showing

---

[2] Ariga Nagao, *La guerre sino-japonaise au point de vue du droit international* (The Sino-Japanese War from the perspective of international law) (Paris: A. Pedone, 1896), vii-viii.

[3] *Meiji shōchoku zenshū* (Complete Meiji imperial rescripts), National Diet Library Digital Collections https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/759508 (in Japanese) (retrieved 10/2022).

compassion toward wounded enemy soldiers and prisoners of war, in accordance with the stated mission of the Red Cross.

Dr. Ariga Nagao, one of the luminaries of international law, lauded the behavior of the Japanese military as follows: "The most striking aspect of the Sino-Japanese War was the effort made by one belligerent toward scrupulous adherence to the laws, regulations, and customs of war, despite the disregard of same by the other." His opinion was in perfect harmony with that of the aforementioned Fauchille. This may seem like bragging, but I wanted to be sure that readers are aware of this particular aspect of Japan's past.

Modern-era atrocities commence

For quite some time some newspapers and anti-Japanese academics and journalists have been disseminating concocted reports of atrocities supposedly committed by Japanese military personnel in China. The reports themselves are a combination of fantasy and distorted, exaggerated fact. Moreover, we have heard unceasing allegations from Chinese, both military personnel and civilians, that they were victims of Japanese barbarism. I have been insisting, repeatedly, that these accusations are nothing but myths.

One of the primary aims of this book is to peel off these veils of fantasy, layer by layer. Let us consider myths concerning the 1st Sino-Japanese War as the first veil to be removed.

There have been numerous massacres in China throughout its history, dating all the way back to ancient times. Executions, as punishment for crimes, could certainly be defined as massacres, given their brutality. But not until the modern era, on the occasion of the 1st Sino-Japanese War, were the Japanese introduced firsthand to long-established sadistic Chinese acts.

But before I discuss Chinese behavior, I would like to introduce the accounts of two war correspondents, Messrs. Ganesco and Lalo, who wrote for the French newspapers Le Figaro and L'Illustration, respectively; they were cited in the February 22, 1895 edition of the Hōchi Shinbun.

Both men were travelling with Japanese troops, observing their every move. The correspondents began their stories by stating that the Japanese imperial forces "conduct themselves in a manner that should make them proud and bring them honor in the eyes of the world." They add that observing and reporting on the Japanese in action gives them great pleasure. They are impressed at the dignified landing of Japanese troops at Rongcheng Bay (on the Shandong peninsula), with not even the slightest bit of disorder. They write about the surprise and awe they experienced upon seeing a sign posted on a house outside the village where the Japanese landed: "Woman in labor. Keep out."

Ganesco and Lalo provided some examples of the compassion Japanese soldiers showed to the enemy, adding that "it was unlikely that one would find the soldiers of any other nation on this vast planet doing the same."

However, in describing the Chinese troops, the French correspondents commented on the contrast between their behavior and that of their Japanese counterparts: "Once the Chinese capture a

Japanese soldier, they will use every means available to them to punish him and cause him to suffer. They will cut off his arms and legs, or decapitate him, or slash off his genitals. Only savages could behave with such cruelty. In spite of these atrocities, the Japanese unfailingly treat the Chinese humanely. Their conduct brings honor to this Far Eastern nation of gentlemen."[4]

There was little if any military discipline among the Chinese. When the Japanese defeated them at Asan, Chinese troops fleeing to Pyongyang committed atrocities against Korean civilians wherever they went – looting, raping, and killing. When Koreans saw the Chinese approaching, they would flee, abandoning their towns and villages. Even Li Hongzhang was so enraged by their actions that he wrote, in a telegram: "[Such behavior] makes my hair stand on end."[5]

According to a report announcing the Chinese defeat at Pyongyang submitted by Li to the Qing court in September 1894, Chinese Army officials had placed a bounty of 30 silver taels on each Japanese head. "Soldiers responded by engaging in bloody battles, capturing more than 200 Japanese, including live prisoners and severed heads."[6] The Chinese motivated their soldiers by offering prize money and the soldiers, desperate for the rewards, went to battle seeking the heads of their enemies. This was a time-honored practice in China in the pre-civilization era known as *shaliang maogong* (killing an innocent victim for a reward from the authorities). But it had no place in modern warfare.

On November 18, 1894, eleven Japanese soldiers went to Tuchengzi, a village north of Port Arthur, on a reconnaissance mission. They were discovered and slaughtered by Chinese troops. Later, when Adjutant Inagaki Saburō of the cavalry battalion commanded by Akiyama Yoshifuru saw what had been done to them, he wrote the following in a letter: "The enemy perpetrated unspeakable atrocities on the corpses of our comrades. They cut off their heads and stripped the skin from their faces. In some cases, they hacked off their genitals; they cut open their chests and filled the cavities with stones. How could anyone fail to be horrified by such a sight?"

I will provide details later, but the cruel methods of killing described in Adjutant Inagaki's letter were used on countless Japanese thereafter until the commencement of the Greater East Asian War.

For the present, I shall cite just one more example. On January 30, 1895, Japanese forces destroyed the Chinese battery at Zhaobei Point. After the enemy fled, the Japanese entered their barracks, where they discovered a straw bundle suspended from the ceiling. When they opened it, they found the heads of seven Japanese, each of which seemed to have been severed with a dull blade. Rope had been strung from the mouth through the throat, presumably to render them more portable.

---

[4] *Hōchi Shinbun*, 22 February 1895. See also Gabriel Roger-Margueritat, "Guerre et presse: la première guerre sino-japonaise (1894-1895) vue par la presse française" (War and the press: the 1st Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) as seen by the French press) https://dumas.ccsd.cnrs.fr/dumas-02504114/document (retrieved 10/2022).

[5] Wang Yunsheng, *Nisshi gaikō 60 nen shi, dainikan* (Sixty years of Sino-Japanese diplomacy, vol. 2) (Tokyo: Kensetsusha, 1933).

[6] *Ibid.*

These were the heads of seven men from the 13th Infantry Regiment, 6th Division, who had set out on the reconnaissance mission in November.[7]

First Army Commander Yamagata Aritomo arrived in Seoul in September 1895. Having been alerted to the brutal tactics employed by the Chinese, he felt compelled to make the following proclamation to the men under his command: "You must not kill enemy soldiers who surrender. However, you must exercise vigilance so that you do not succumb to their tricks. Since ancient times they have been using exceedingly brutal tactics. If you have the misfortune to be captured alive, you will be made to suffer torture that is worse than death, and you will end up dying in the most cruel, barbaric manner imaginable. Therefore, it is far better to resign yourself to dying in battle, thus preserving your honor as a Japanese."[8]

This was the first directive prohibiting Japanese soldiers from being taken prisoner during warfare. Japanese military personnel in battle zones abided by that directive until the end of the Greater East Asian War.

It is easy to see why atrocities committed by Chinese troops so profoundly shocked Japanese soldiers, who adhered so faithfully to military rules. Chinese atrocities, which forced the Japanese to make the grim resolve never to suffer the humiliation of becoming prisoners"[9] were perpetrated by inhabitants of the Asian continent against Japanese soldiers who were fighting their first extensive foreign war since the founding of Japan's armed forces.

Here I would like to say a few words about the "Port Arthur Massacre." On November 21, 1894, when Japanese forces captured that city, exaggerated reports to the effect that they had massacred a great many Chinese civilians were disseminated throughout the world. Subsequently many other sensational, distorted reports were circulated, with the "Nanjing Massacre" at their pinnacle. The accounts of the "Port Arthur Massacre" are noteworthy because they were the first of their kind.

The most grossly inflated description emanated from the New York World. Its correspondent wrote: "For four days beginning with the day after the fall of Port Arthur, the Japanese murdered approximately 60,000 noncombatants, including women and children. No more than 36 Chinese in all of Port Arthur are known to have survived the slaughter."[10]

However, reports in other news media were quite different. For instance, the London Times accused the Japanese of murdering 200 Chinese indiscriminately. But another British source, the Central News Agency, countered that estimate, maintaining that not one Chinese was killed except during fair combat. French sources published accounts stating that both sides committed atrocities.

---

[7] Hasegawa Shin, *Nihon horyo shi, jō* (Prisoners of war in Japan, vol. 1) (Tokyo: Shinshōsetsusha, 1955).

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Instructions in the "View of Life and Death" section of the *Senjinkun* (Field Service Guide) issued on 08 January 1941.

[10] Fujimura Michio, *Nisshin sensō* (1st Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1973); the author is citing a report written by James Creelman for the 12 December 1894 edition of the *New York World*.

They also mentioned that when the Japanese discovered that their comrades whom the Chinese had taken prisoner were tortured and brutally murdered (some even had their extremities chopped off), they killed every Chinese soldier in sight. The Austrian press too asserted that both the Japanese and Chinese had committed atrocities. German news outlets revealed that any excesses on the part of the Japanese were justified. This information, taken from reports issued by foreign legations in Japan, can be found in *Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy*.[11]

Upon examination, the account in New York World claiming that 60,000 Chinese were massacred does not hold water. In 1894 the city of Port Arthur occupied approximately 0.24 square kilometers. Could such a small place have accommodated 60,000 residents? Population density would have been 250,000 persons per square kilometer, an impossible figure. (Since in 1985 the population density in Tokyo was less than 14,000 persons per square kilometer, it is obvious that the figure of 250,000 is preposterous. Later, when a new city sprang up in Port Arthur, there were still only about 14,000 Manchurians living in the old and new districts combined. The claim that there were more than 60,000 persons living in the old city, at the time of the 1st Sino-Japanese War, is nonsensical.

I find it inexplicable that the author of the aforementioned *1st Sino-Japanese War* presented the aggrandized figure of 60,000 massacre victims in New York World without comment, as though he were reporting facts. Did he expect readers to take it at face value? Even the downward revision to 20,000 victims that prevails in today's China is a gross exaggeration.

Then what did happen at Port Arthur?[12]

Dr. Ariga Nagao, a jurist whose specialty was international law, who served as legal advisor to the Japanese military, and who was present at the fall of Port Arthur, analyzed events following the Chinese defeat in *The Sino-Japanese War from the Perspective of International Law.*[13]

Commander in Chief Ōyama Iwao acknowledged that when the Japanese advanced into the city of Port Arthur, his men opened fire without attempting to distinguish between belligerents and noncombatants. However, they had good reasons for doing so, as follows.

(1) Port Arthur was not a city that developed naturally into a commercial hub. Rather, it was a port town that was built for military reasons. As its residents were noncombatants in service to the military, it was inevitable that they would become enmeshed in any fighting that took place there.
(2) Since Chinese stragglers (soldiers from defeated units) entered into and shot from private houses, the Japanese had ample justification for firing into those houses, even though noncombatants may also have been inside them.

[11] *Gaimushō hensan* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed.), *Nihon gaikō bunsho* (Documents on Japanese foreign policy) (Tokyo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1963).

[12] Now known as Lüshunkou, it was formerly known as Port Arthur because its harbor was surveyed by a British Navy officer named William Arthur in 1860.

[13] Ariga, *op. cit*., 81.

(3) Since many Chinese stragglers infiltrated private houses and changed into civilian clothing, the Japanese had great difficulty distinguishing belligerents from noncombatants.

Having explained why the Japanese had good reason to open fire even when they could not tell whether their targets were belligerents or noncombatants, Ariga questions whether there was a need to fight an intense battle at Port Arthur. But since this is a tactical question, not a legal one, he refrains from passing judgement. Moreover, as far as criticism of the killing of women and children is concerned, Ariga insists that "very few of the dead were women or children … the body of one woman was found floating on the water, and another on the road," adding that any such victims must have found themselves in the midst of a group of men.[14]

About the events that transpired at Port Arthur, Dr. Ariga argued that since the Chinese flagrantly disregarded the rules of war, it was not necessary for the Japanese to adhere to said laws, strictly speaking, and that the Japanese bore absolutely no responsibility for whatever events that took place there. But since, regardless of the terrible way in which the Chinese behaved, the Japanese voluntarily resolved to adhere to the rules of war, and having made that decision, bore the responsibility for their actions. This is the reason why Ariga found the Port Arthur incident regrettable.

To unravel the misunderstandings in the exaggerated report that appeared in the New York World, I would like to present the written explanation submitted by Japan's Foreign Ministry, addressed to the heads of foreign legations in China (in English).
7

> There is no question as to the fact that there was more blood shed at Port Arthur than at any other place, and perhaps more than was absolutely necessary; but reports sent abroad by foreign correspondents, especially by the reporter of The World, are greatly exaggerated and highly colored, so as to give sensational effect.
>
> At the fall of Port Arthur Chinese soldiers (…) discarded their military uniforms, and, putting on citizens dress, disguised themselves as peaceful inhabitants of the place, and betook themselves to the vacant houses of the town (…) when at last they were discovered by the Japanese [they] offered resistance and fought to the last.
>
> Some of the peaceful inhabitants who had not left the place before the battle were said to have been ordered to fire and resist, which they did; but most of those found killed at Port Arthur proved to be soldiers in disguise. This is shown from the fact that almost all the corpses found had on them some articles of Chinese military dress inside the outer garments.
>
> One of the foreign correspondents has said that, as most of the killed at Port Arthur bore sword-cut wounds, they presented a more horrible spectacle than if they had received bullet wounds.
>
> The Japanese soldiers were greatly excited by the sight of the fearfully mutilated bodies of their comrades who had been taken prisoners by the Chinese; some of whom had been burnt alive, while others had been crucified. In spite of this the

[14] Ariga, *op. cit.*

> Japanese preserved discipline, and none of those who peacefully surrendered themselves were either killed or maltreated, and about 355 Chinese prisoners who were taken at the fall of Port Arthur have been kindly treated, and are being brought to Tokyo, where they will arrive in a few days.[15]

Furthermore, a report issued by Tei Eishō, a Japanese diplomat appointed administrator of government after the fall of Port Arthur, describes the situation in that city before and after it fell.

> As soon as he heard that the Japanese had landed at Huayuankou (on October 24), the mayor of Port Arthur, overcome with fear, secretly decamped to Zhifu with his family. Abandoned, the residents of the city were greatly troubled. They gathered up their belongings and their families and one after the other fled to Zhifu or nearby villages. A great number of Chinese soldiers who were stationed at Port Arthur broke into private houses, looted, and smashed furniture. When the Japanese entered Port Arthur, they confronted an empty city.[16]

I would certainly like to know the source of the 20,000 (or 60,000) "estimates."

It is likely that some of the noncombatants remaining in the city who resisted the Japanese were killed. But they died in action; they were not massacred. A massacre is brutal murder, or the killing of a large number of people for no reason. That is why Ariga, who was disappointed that Chinese noncombatants were killed, did not use the word *massacre*. To put it simply, a battle was fought in Port Arthur and people died there, but there was no massacre.

Here I would like to mention the lengths to which the Japanese military went, 10 years later, when the Russo-Japanese War broke out, to protect Russian noncombatants. In August 1904 Japan's Third Army advanced to a location about 8 kilometers from the city of Port Arthur, and completely surrounded the enemy within the basic line of defense. At this time Emperor Meiji communicated his desire to spare enemy noncombatants inside the fortress from the ravages of war to Gen. Nogi Maresuke, the commanding officer. Consequently, on August 16 Gen. Nogi dispatched Artillery Maj. Yamaoka Kumaji to Port Arthur to negotiate with the enemy. Yamaoka delivered a letter co-signed by Gen. Nogi and Adm. Tōgō Heihachirō, commander of the Combined Fleet, to Russian Gen. Anatoly Stessel. The letter conveyed the emperor's wishes and urged the Russians to surrender. However, on the following day, Yamaoka returned with the news that the Russians had chosen to disregard the Japanese warning; the Japanese proceeded to launch an all-out attack on Port Arthur.

Japanese military leaders were determined to avoid a recurrence of the events that had transpired at Port Arthur during the preceding war, and went out of their way to act in good faith during the Russo-Japanese War. Their efforts were proof of Japanese fairness and honesty, and should certainly be preserved in history.

---

[15] *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1894* https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1894app1/d87 (retrieved 10/2022).

[16] Ariga, *op. cit.*, 83-84.

3. TREATY OF SHIMONOSEKI AND THE TRIPLE INTERVENTION

Pitting one barbarian against another

Defying the world's expectations, the Japanese handed China a resounding defeat. Triumphing in battle after battle, the Japanese gathered so much momentum that they were poised to launch a strike on Peking. When the Japanese crushed the Chinese Army during the Battle of Pyongyang, and sent the Beiyang Fleet into oblivion at the Battle of the Yalu River, the Chinese were already petitioning for peace talks. The peace conference was held at the Shunpanro, a hotel in Shimonoseki. Presiding over it were Itō Hirobumi and Mutsu Munemitsu, both invested with plenipotentiary powers, representing Japan, and Li Hongzhang and his son Li Jingfang, also invested with plenipotentiary powers, representing China. The resulting agreement was signed and sealed on April 17, 1895.

The framework of what became the Treaty of Shimonoseki follows:

1. China recognizes the full and complete independence and autonomy of Korea.
2. China cedes to Japan in perpetuity the Liaodong peninsula, Formosa (Taiwan) and all appertaining islands, and the Pescadores Islands.
3. China agrees to pay to Japan as a war indemnity 200 million taels.
4. All treaties between Japan and China shall terminate as a consequence of war, and new treaties of commerce and navigation shall be concluded.
5. Immediately upon the exchange of the ratifications of this Act, all prisoners of war then held shall be restored; China undertakes not to abuse or execute prisoners of war so restored to her by Japan.[1]

Unfortunately, no sooner had the treaty been concluded than Japan was confronted by a bolt from the blue in the form of interference from Western powers.

There is a traditional Chinese diplomatic stratagem that involves pitting one barbarian tribe or state against another to gain the upper hand. For instance, China might use a third-party nation to rein in an enemy or to further its own interests. Other similar tactics are *yuan jiao jingong* (collaborating with distant allies and attacking nearby nations) and *jiedao sharen* (killing someone with a borrowed knife). They involve forming an alliance with a distant entity (or using its power) with the intention of destroying an enemy. These diplomatic strategies have been employed for centuries and are still in favor today, and they may be peculiar to the Chinese.

They were used in the 1st Sino-Japanese War as well, in the following way: the Chinese were secretly hoping that Russia would interfere, and if it did, that the war situation would turn in their favor. They were overly optimistic, assuming that the Russians would never take advantage of them by demanding the three eastern provinces (Manchuria).

[1] https://www.taiwanbasic.com/treaties/Shimonoseki.htm (retrieved 10/2022).

At first the Russians believed that there was absolutely no possibility of a Japanese victory. But as the Japanese won battle after battle, the Russians began to come to their senses. Seeking ice-free ports, they were eager to acquire territory on the Manchuria-Korea border and the Liaodong peninsula. Not being inclined to tolerate a situation that would hinder their ambition, they decided to interfere.

China's own policies certainly facilitated Russian interference.

As soon as the Treaty of Shimonoseki was concluded, the Qing court erupted in noisy opposition. For instance, Zhang Zhidong, then the viceroy of Huguang (Hubei and Hunan provinces), expressed the following, mind-boggling opinion: "Waste no time in requesting assistance from the UK, Russia, and Germany, offering concessions in return. Do not be parsimonious about this; the rewards must be handsome. It is highly unlikely that the UK, Russia, or Germany will make trouble for us, no matter what we give them. They are far away, as opposed to the Japanese blight." Zhang was saying that if the three powers helped effect the annulment of the treaty, they should be given whatever they asked for. This was an injudicious proposal akin to inviting a wolf into the room to chase away the Japanese. But such as it was, that was the idea that sprang from the brilliant minds of Li Hongzhang and Chinese and Korean politicians in connection with the Treaty of Shimonoseki.[2]

The Triple Intervention: origin of 50 years of East Asia misfortune

The Triple Intervention, as it came to be known, took place just as the Chinese had hoped it would. On April 23, before the ink on the Treaty of Shimonoseki had dried, Russia, France, and Germany "advised" Japan to retrocede the Liaodong peninsula, which Japan had rightfully won. The "advice" from the Russian legation, motivated by "sincere friendship," was for Japan to relinquish the Liaodong peninsula, since Japanese possession of the peninsula would not only pose a threat to the Chinese capital, but also render Korean independence a status in name but not in reality, thus hindering a lasting peace in the Far East. Communiqués from France and Germany contained similar wording.

Zhang Zhidong wasted no time in announcing the revocation of the treaty to the Qing emperor. The content of his message was truly astounding. "If we are going to ask the three nations for help, we must not lie to them. We must make a genuine offer in the form of territory or other useful reward. "It would be better to cede Weihaiwei, Port Arthur, and Taiwan to Russia or the UK rather than to the barbarians (Japan). After we have intimidated the barbarians by abrogating the treaty, we should give Xinjiang or the Southern (or Northern) Silk Road to Russia, and Tibet to the UK."

There was more: Zhang proposed having "a fleet from either Russia or the UK attack Yokohama or Nagasaki. Or perhaps Hiroshima[3] should be first. That will certainly terrify the barbarians. China should revoke the treaty without bloodying its sword, with the help of either the UK or

[2] Wang Yunsheng, *op. cit.*

[3] During the 1st Sino-Japanese War, the Japanese military headquarters were located in Hiroshima.

Russia."[4] This conspiracy combined two ancient tactics (pitting barbarian against barbarian, and committing a murder with a borrowed knife). We can only guess what influence the recommendation of someone like Zhang, who had acquired a reputation as a brilliant politician, had on the inclinations of the Qing court.

Imagine the baseness of mind of a prominent Chinese politician who was eager to borrow the power of Russia and the UK to destroy Japan. It is likely that thought processes like his provided the impetus for 50 years of misfortune for East Asia.

The Triple Intervention was accomplished via the threat of military force. The Japanese had neither the military nor financial strength to fight a new war against three major powers at the same time. Left with no other choice, they swallowed their tears, accepted the "advice," and restored the Liaodong peninsula to China. Russia expressed its satisfaction with the action taken by Japan, offering its congratulations to Japan for its contribution to world peace. But not only did Japan's retrocession of the peninsula *not* bring about world peace, it also precipitated the next war. Only the gods knew that it would trigger the tribulations that plagued East Asia for the next 50 years.

The Triple Intervention and Japanese public opinion

How did the Japanese public react to the Triple Intervention? Since the citizens of Japan were hoping that their army would storm Peking, they could not possibly have accepted the shameful Triple Intervention. Moved to calm the enraged populace and encourage his subjects to think beyond the current situation, Emperor Meiji issued a rescript in which he counseled his subjects to exercise patience and restraint: "Allow your thoughts to venture beyond the current situation. Avoid being distracted by trivial matters. Do not allow your emotions to control you. Behave prudently, lest our nation's grand plan be diverted in the wrong direction."[5] Almost exactly 50 years later, Emperor Showa uttered the following words in his rescript announcing Japan's surrender:

> We are keenly aware of the inmost feelings of all ye, Our subjects. However, it is according to the dictate of time and fate that We have resolved to pave the way for grand peace for all the generations to come by enduring the unendurable and suffering what is insufferable.[6]

When we compare the two, we can certainly sense the deep emotions that inspired both of them.

The Meiji rescript did succeed in placating the Japanese public. For instance, the Osaka Asahi Shimbun also encouraged restraint: "We respect the depth of generosity in His Majesty's heart, so much so that we can only shed bitter tears. Having read the Rescript, we have no words to offer; we can only weep. As His Majesty's loyal subjects, our only choice is to remain calm and attentive,

---

[4] Wang Yunsheng, op. cit.; Furukawa Gyōson, *Kindai Shina gaikō hiroku* (Confidential diplomatic records from modern China) (Tokyo: Uedaya Shoten, 1935).

[5] kunitama2664.sakura.ne.jp/kansyou280510.html (in Japanese).

[6] "Surrender of Japan," Wikimedia Foundation, last modified 16 October 2022. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Surrender_of_Japan (retrieved 10/2022).

and await His Majesty's future decisions."[7]. Fukuzawa Yukichi too asked his compatriots to tolerate the intolerable when he wrote, "Given the forces at work in the world, we can only exercise patience."[8]

But coexisting with these exhortations for patience was a movement seeking to hold the government responsible for the humiliation of the retrocession and to encourage military expansion. Some Lower-House Diet members, among them Ozaki Yukio and Inukai Tsuyoshi, foreign policy hardliners, launched a campaign in June 1896 seeking an extraordinary Diet session to discuss the following three points.

(1) Expand the military immediately to restore Japan's honor
(2) Compel the government to accept responsibility for the retrocession of Liaodong
(3) Maintain Japanese authority and status in Korea.

But the movement was suppressed on the grounds that it was detrimental to the public peace.

Though influenced by the various entreaties for patience, the Japanese people keenly felt ashamed and regretful of having to accept the Triple Intervention due to a lack of national strength, and recognized the necessity of military expansion. In Jiji Shinpō, Fukuzawa Yukichi took the lead in advocating military expansion even in peacetime: "The fact that we are at peace today does not mean that we need not worry about tomorrow. We are placing ourselves in danger if our military preparations are incomplete, even in peacetime. This would be like failing to ready a padded jacket, believing that the winter will not be cold." Fukuzawa argued in favor of emergency military expansion and scolded the government for its hesitance to submit armament-expansion legislation to the Diet. He also urged the government to begin building battleships immediately (Diet approval could be obtained after the fact). Fukuzawa was voted down, but his arguments elicited the following comment from Ozaki Yukio, one of the signers of the accusatory petition: "Given a precedent like this one, i.e., letting hard-won territory that cost thousands of lives slip through our hands because of diplomatic blunders, we would be hard put to find even one soldier, no matter how loyal and brave, who would sacrifice his life in a national crisis."[9]

Strange as this may seem, this was the same Ozaki Yukio who later became known as the "god of constitutional politics." But his comment reflects the feelings of the Japanese public about the Triple Intervention. It is important to realize that it was not only the Diet representatives and journalists who called for military expansion, but also the citizens of Japan. A new age had dawned with a new objective, as the Japanese poured their energy into strengthening their country, vowing to recapture the Liaodong peninsula one day.

[7] Ōsaka Asahi Shimbun, 13 May 1895.

[8] Jiji Shinpō, 01 June 1895.

[9] Isa Hideo, *Ozaki Yukio den* (Biography of Ozaki Yukio) (Tokyo: Ozaki Yukio Kinen Zaidan, 1964).

4. KOREA AND THE 1ST SINO-JAPANESE WAR

The Gabo Reforms: beginning of Korean modernization

Because Korea objected strenuously, with enthusiastic Chinese support, to domestic reforms proposed by Japan, the Japanese decided to take matters into their own hands. They ousted Queen Min's government and established a pro-Japanese government with the Daewongun at its head. The Japan-led domestic reforms instituted by the new government during the 1st Sino-Japanese War are referred to as the Gabo Reforms.

At the core of the Gabo Reforms was a provisional government run by a collegial body called the Deliberative Council, whose members each had an equal voice and whose decisions were made by majority vote. The Council existed for less than five months (from July 25, 1894, immediately after Japanese demands succeeded in putting an end to China's suzerainty over Korea, until December 17 of that year). Still, a great many reforms were accomplished during that brief period. They represented Korea's first attempt at modernization, and included the following:

1. The Chinese calendar was replaced with a Korean calendar that begins in 1392, the year the Joseon dynasty was established
2. Hiring was to be done without regard to social class or lineage
3. Slave trade was banned
4. Widows were permitted to remarry regardless of social class
5. Common people could now express their opinions to the Deliberative Council; those with significant talent could be hired as government officials
6. Government officials guilty of acquiring ill-gotten gains would be punished
7. Arrest and punishment unsupported by judicial authority were prohibited
8. Stevedores, actors, and leather workers were no longer be considered outcasts
9. Torture was prohibited
10. Taxes were to be paid in cash
11. Talented students would have opportunities to study abroad
12. Foreign advisers would be hired
13. The use of opium was banned

The decision was made to implement 208 reforms. An examination of the 13 listed above tell us how stagnant and backward Korean politics and society had been. Even so, equally backward China would never have countenanced such reforms.

Unfortunately, internecine strife in Korea presented a serious obstacle to the reforms. The Daewongun and the Deliberative Council were at odds. In August Kim Hong-jip and Eo Yun-jung, both moderate gradualists, formed a cabinet, reportedly to assuage the friction between the new government and the Daewongun.

The conflict between the Daewongun and the Deliberative Council was not over policy; it was nothing more than factional strife. But since the new cabinet was unable to support or control either side, domestic reforms stagnated. Ōtori Keisuke, the Japanese ambassador to Korea, was recalled to Japan, and in mid-October Inoue Kaoru replaced him.

The first thing Inoue did was to remove the Daewongun from the government. He then presented a 20-item domestic reform proposal to the Korean government, commenting that "the administration must form a united front." However, Queen Min's followers, eager to regain power, prevailed upon King Gojong who, without consulting either the prime minister or Inoue, appointed four members of the queen's faction to ministerial positions. Inoue took issue with the queen's interference in government affairs. In December he launched an essentially pro-Japanese cabinet (for instance, he selected Pak Yong-hyo as home minister) and reshaped the government bureaucracy by abolishing the Deliberative Council.

In January 1895 King Gojong announced his 14-article reform charter called "Exemplary Rules," which included the reforms listed below. They are quite reminiscent of modernization policies implemented during the Meiji Renovation.

Article 1: Korea will suppress the tendency to depend upon China, and establish a basis for autonomy.

Article 3: Neither the king nor the queen may interfere in government affairs.

Article 4: There will be separation between royal and government affairs.

Article 5: Official boundaries shall be set between the State Council and the various government offices.

Article 6: Law will govern all taxation.

Article 11: Talented young people will be given the opportunity to study abroad.

Article 12: A conscription system shall be established

Article 13: Civil and criminal laws shall be enacted.

Article 14: Persons from a variety of backgrounds shall be hired; social class alone will no longer be the deciding factor.

Impediments to Korean independence

Unfortunately, domestic discord in Korea engendered an atmosphere of hopelessness. On February 11, not long after the reform charter was promulgated, it collapsed due to disputes between old-school politicians like Prime Minister Kim Hong-jip and Minister of Revenue Eo Yun-jung, and progressives like Minister of the Interior Pak Yong-hyo. This situation was exacerbated by Gojong's and Queen Min's secret plan that involved using Pak Yong-hyo, their archenemy since the Gapsin Coup, to help them supplant Kim Hong-jip and Eo Yun-jung and recover their former power.

The 1st Sino-Japanese War, waged while the Gabo Reforms were in progress, ended with an overwhelming Japanese victory. But Japan's deferring to Russia in the Triple Intervention gave

rise to an anti-Japanese, pro-Russian proclivity at the Korean court. The conflict between the progressives and the conservatives continued to worsen and ultimately became one between pro-Japanese and pro-Russian factions.

On June 4 Japan's Diet passed a resolution concerning Korea policy. Japan would, in the future, avoid interfering in Korean affairs, and allow Korea to achieve autonomy on its own. However, this policy change was interpreted by Queen Min as a manifestation of Japan's fear of Russia. She began to attempt to rein Japan in through pro-Russian policies, and to acquire more strength for her faction.

Russia took full advantage of the discord between the progressives and conservatives. Russian Ambassador Weber made overtures to Queen Min and her followers, boasting about Russia's might. What ensued was a seemingly endless, secretive feud that festered and grew within Korea, and soon caused political upheaval.

Readers may feel that I have devoted an inordinate amount of space to the Gabo Reforms and to the domestic situation in Korea, which obstructed those reforms. But it is important to realize that this was the starting point of Japan's relationship with Korea in the modern era, and it is impossible to portray Korean history equitably unless we delve into these events. If it had not been for Korean internal conflict, reforms based on the Meiji Renovation model would have proceeded steadily, and Korean independence and modernization would certainly have made great strides forward. Since Japan's victory in the 1st Sino-Japanese War had rid Korea of its Chinese yoke, domestic reforms had gotten underway with Japanese guidance, and Japanese interference was limited under the world's watchful eyes, this was the perfect opportunity for Korea to achieve independence as a modern nation. However, the Koreans wasted that opportunity.

The Koreans forgot about independence during this most opportune moment, instead allowing themselves to be distracted by domestic discord. They rejected modernization, claiming it was a Japanese plot. There is a propitious time for the independence of a nation or a people. When it comes, they must sense it, and use it to their best advantage – that is the wisdom of a people. A good example of that phenomenon was Japan's Meiji Renovation. The fact that the Koreans were unable to effectively use this precious opportunity, when it presented itself to them, the way to independence and modernization showed to them by Japan, is totally their fault. Blaming Japan for their failings is exceedingly reprehensible, and grossly unfair.

In any case, after Russia began to cast its shadow over Korea, international politics abruptly turned a cold shoulder toward Korea. The opportunity for independence was never again to arise.

Pro-Russian, anti-Japanese environment worsens; Eulmi Incident

After the 1st Sino-Japanese War, the Korean political situation took another, major turn. When Japan submitted to the Triple Intervention, pro-Japanese elements in Korea were in turmoil. Meanwhile, the Russians, conspiring with Queen Min, toppled the pro-Japan cabinet, and the pro-Russians began maneuvering their way toward control of Korea. At that time the palace was protected by a corps of guards under the command of Americans. But the guards themselves were undisciplined, old-style soldiers. There was also a Military Training Division with proper discipline, consisting of two battalions (800 men) trained by a Japanese instructor. To get rid of

all Japanese sympathizers, the Russians abolished the Military Training Division and confiscated their weapons, infuriating the officers and their men.

I have alluded to Queen Min innumerable times thus far, and must needs allude to her once again. She was reputed to be a harridan, and was often characterized as intelligent, wily, deceitful, envious, and ruthless. She was certainly a strong-minded woman, and is often compared to the Chinese Empress Dowager Cixi. She became King Gojong's consort, and having won his affection, began to meddle constantly in state affairs. When the king received foreign dignitaries, Queen Min, hidden behind a folding screen, would whisper suggestions to him. Her whims would more often than not cause upheavals in Korean politics. After the 1st Sino-Japanese War, she was instrumental in creating an anti-Japanese, pro-Russian climate.

"Bury the queen!" became the war cry not only of Japanese idealists in Korea, but also of Korean politicians who opposed the queen's faction. Through Japanese idealists, pro-Japan Koreans like Gen. I Ju-hoe, Military Training Division Commander I Du-hwang, and U Beom-seon approached opponents of the queen who were ready to take action. Their efforts resulted in the formation of a federation of Japanese and Korean volunteers.[1]

On October 7, 1895 the Korean government announced that the Military Training Division would be disbanded and its weapons confiscated. Early the next morning, the Military Training Division and Japanese and Korean partisans, under orders from Japanese Ambassador Miura Gorō, who had pledged to do away with Queen Min, entered the palace with the Daewongun. The Military Training Division clashed with palace guards and an altercation ensued in the palace during which Queen Min was killed. This series of events became known as the Eulmi Incident. The pro-Japanese faction took control of the government, replacing the pro-Russian faction. But when the Japanese government learned that Japanese nationals had been involved in the incident, it conducted an investigation, recalled more than 40 Japanese, including Ambassador Miura, to Japan, and put them in prison.

Korean condemnation of the incident was extremely severe. The Military Training Division was dissolved, and its commanders I Ju-hoe and U Beom-seon discharged. Thirty-three persons allegedly complicit in the murder of Queen Min were arrested and tried. Three Koreans who had played pivotal roles were executed, including I Ju-hoe.

I Ju-hoe reacted to the news that Ambassador Miura and other Japanese had been arrested as follows. "It is quite obvious that the entire nation of Japan did its utmost to help my country, Korea. Many of our Japanese partisans have been imprisoned. It would be extremely immoral to turn a blind eye to this situation." He then calmly submitted to arrest and execution. I's dying for what he believed was right moved Japanese partisans so deeply that later they had a stone monument

[1] Kokuryūkai (Black Dragon Society), *Tōa senkaku shishi kiden, jō* (Biographies of pioneer East Asian patriots, vol. 1) (Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1966).

erected to honor the three Koreans who had been executed: I Ju-hoe, I Du-hwang, and U Beom-seon, thus preserving the heroic deeds of I Ju-hoe for future generations.[2]

The killing of Queen Min was an extraordinary event. But at that juncture nearly every event that transpired in Korea was equally extraordinary. These were far from normal times.

Russian "protectorship" of Korea

Pro-Russian elements in Korea wasted no time in exacting revenge upon the pro-Japanese faction. In November, after the Eulmi Incident, the pro-Russia faction conspired with American military instructors, hatching a plan to kidnap the Korean king and confine him in the Russian legation. However, the kidnappers were thwarted by imperial guards, and most of them fled to the Russian and American legations. As far as strife involving the king and queen was concerned, the abortive abduction was an incident just as extraordinary as the murder of the queen, but Russia's manipulation of King Gojong took its most bizarre form during the following year when the king's internal exile to the Russian legation began.

Soon after the death of Queen Min, Kim Hong-jip formed a new pro-Japanese cabinet, and once again began implementing reforms. The new government did away with the calendar Korea had inherited from China, and replaced it with the solar calendar on November 17, 1895; 1392, the year marking the beginning of the Joseon dynasty, was designated year one. Following the Japanese model, the government also established the first elementary schools in Seoul, four of them, set up a system for vaccinating children, and established a postal system. Additionally, it limited the era name to one for each ruler's reign, and settled upon Geonyang as the era name beginning with 1896, the 505th year of the Joseon dynasty. Another reform was the Short Hair Act, which involved the cutting off of men's topknots; King Gojong set an example by being the first to submit to the shears.

But the fact that the Short Hair Act was compulsory alienated the Korean people, and in 1896 uprisings cropped up all over the nation. In January the military response to these uprisings left the capital without a robust defense. Russian Ambassador Weber took advantage of that situation by bringing 100 Russian sailors into Korea supposedly to protect the Russian legation. Conspiring with pro-Russian Koreans, Weber kidnapped the king on February 11 and escorted him to the Russian legation. The king's sojourn there is referred to as Gojong's internal exile. Americans too were instrumental in carrying off this plot.

Now that the pro-Russian faction had the upper hand, government leaders Kim Hong-jip and Eo Yun-jung were murdered, and many members of the pro-Japan faction fled to Japan. According to Daily Mail correspondent F.A. MacKenzie, abnormal acts were rampant: "Two ministers were dragged into the street and slaughtered there with every accompaniment of brutality." One man even carved a piece of flesh from one of the corpses and put it into his mouth.[3]

---

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] F.A. Mackenzie, *The Tragedy of Korea* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1908), 81.

Gojong issued edicts from the Russian legation, ordering the arrest of Japanese sympathizers and annulling the Short Hair Act and other reforms. The disorder in Korea reached crisis level. During the turmoil more than 30 Japanese were killed, and Japanese assets valued at more than ¥10,000 were stolen or destroyed. Japan's authority in Korea had sunk to historical depths. Korean government affairs were decided at the Russian legation, where the king was ensconced, and Russia controlled the Korean political situation.

Russian military personnel protected the pro-Russian cabinet, and two advisers arrived from Russia to control Korean financial and military affairs. Twenty Russian officers trained the Korean military, and weapons and ammunition were imported from Vladivostok. The Russians continued to gain power as Russian language schools sprang up, and Russia acquired mining rights in Hamgyong province. For the year during which the King lived at the Russian legation, Russia steadily reaped the fruits of its "protectorship." Russian accumulation of interests served as a stimulus to other great powers. During Gojong's internal exile, Korea made a great many concessions to Russia and other powers.

Gojong's internal exile meant that Korean policy was drafted at the Russian legation, another extraordinary circumstance. Korea's political future looked very worrisome.

At this point Japan was exploring two options: (1) collaborate with Western powers in guaranteeing Korean independence, or (2) enter into an agreement with Russia for joint administration of Korean domestic affairs. Since the Western powers were uninterested in Korea's problems, the only option for Japan was to collaborate with the Russians to prevent them from making further inroads into Korea. The resulting agreements were the Komura-Weber Memorandum (May 1896), named after Japanese Ambassador to Korea, Komura Jutarō, and his Russian counterpart, Karl Ivanovich Weber, and the Yamagata-Lobanov Agreement (June 1896), named after its signatories, former Japanese Prime Minister, Yamagata Aritomo, and Russian Foreign Minister Alexei Lobanov-Rostovsky.

A balance of power had been achieved between Japan and Russia, and stability was restored in Korea. In February 1897, Gojong departed from the Russian legation and returned to the palace.

Russia's bad faith

Unfortunately, subsequent Russian behavior was nothing short of deceitful. Foreign Minister Lobanov, while entering into an agreement with Japan, almost simultaneously signed secret pacts with China (the Li-Lobanov Treaty) and Korea. The one with Korea enabled Russia to send Russian military instructors to the Korean court and to acquire lumber options in the Yalu River valley, thus trampling on the agreement with Japan. In April 1897 the Koreans signed a contract with Russia for the hiring of 60 Russian officers, revealing that their attachment to Russia was still very much alive. The Japanese asked the Koreans to desist from employing Russian officers, but the Koreans ignored the request. In September King Gojong announced that he should now be addressed as "emperor." He changed the name of his country to Daehan jeguk, or Great Korean Empire, and by doing so he had succeeded in creating, at least superficially, an independent country.

At about the same time, Alexey Shpeyer replaced Weber as Russian ambassador to Korea.

According to the aforementioned F.A. MacKenzie, Shpeyer was a dynamic Russian expansionist. He "plainly had orders to quicken the pace, and he did so. He assumed a most aggressive and unpleasant attitude towards other foreigners, and this quickly brought matters to a crisis."[4]

Shpeyer, unlike Weber, came out with uncompromising Korean policies, supported by the secret Russo-Korean agreement. In 1897, after painstaking efforts, the Japanese managed to acquire a copy of that secret agreement, forged in 1896. The agreement included a provision stating that the king of Korea was welcome to reside at the Russian legation for as long as he liked, as well as Korean promises to hire Russian military and financial advisers. To make matters even more interesting, Foreign Minister Lobanov later said that Russia would enter into a defensive alliance with Korea: Russia would send troops to Korea in the event of a domestic uprising or a threat from another nation that might jeopardize the autonomy and independence of Korea.

But high-pressure Russian diplomatic tactics backfired when they incurred the enmity of the Korean people. In meetings held in February and March of 1898, criticism of Russia intensified. It was during that period that Shpeyer told Japanese Ambassador Katō Masuo that in his personal opinion, the Korean court could not be saved unless drastic measures were taken, that Korea would never achieve independence, and that Japan and Russia should form a joint protectorate to administer Korea.

Shpeyer, enraged by Korean animosity, told the Korean court that he would not tolerate sudden Korean lack of appreciation for Russian goodwill, reminding them it was upon Korea's request that Russia had sent military instructors and financial advisors. He asked whether they still wanted help from Russia. If the answer was yes, Russia would take the necessary action, but he needed a decision within 24 hours. When the shocked Koreans sought advice secretly from Japan, the Japanese advised them to politely decline Russian aid, and the Koreans took their advice. As a result, on Marach 23, Russian military and financial advisors departed from Korea.

Russian influence over Korea had subsided, but the ever-vigilant Russians now shifted their focus to a new target – a southward advance to Manchuria. Russia leased Port Arthur and Dalian from China on March 27, only four days after its military and financial advisers had left Korea.

Needless to say, Port Arthur and Dalian were pivotal locations on the Liaodong peninsula, both for military and commercial reasons. After all, it was those areas that Russia, France, and Germany had successfully pressured Japan to retrocede to China. Russia felt compelled to obtain Japanese acknowledgement for its unethical leasing of the retroceded territory. The resulting agreement was the Nishi-Rosen Agreement, named after Foreign Ministers Nishi Tokujirō and Roman Romanovich Rosen, and concluded in April 1898.

According to that agreement, both nations agreed to desist from interfering in domestic Korean affairs, and promised to obtain prior approval from the other party before supplying military or financial advisers in response to requests from Korea. It was an instrument that served as a

[4] *Ibid.*, 92-93.

framework for Russian acknowledgement of Japanese commercial interests in Korea, and therefore Japan's sphere of influence in Korea, and Japan's implicit recognition of Russia's leasing of Port Arthur and Dalian.

Still, as Japanese ambassador to the UK, Katō Takaaki, put it, it soon became clear that "the promise not to interfere in Korean domestic affairs is an empty one." In other words, Russia certainly did not abandon its inroads into Korea as stated in the agreement. The Russians eventually completed the Trans-Siberian and Chinese Eastern railways, and when the finishing touches had been put on Russian preparations for invasion of the Far East, they sat back and waited for the right time to once again pounce on the Korean peninsula.

1. HIGH COST OF THE TRIPLE INTERVENTION

Secret pact between Russia and China

The primary cause of the turmoil in the Far East that commenced with the Russo-Japanese War and culminated in the Manchurian Incident was monumentally foolish policy decisions made by the Chinese. When the Japanese retroceded the Liaodong peninsula to China via the Triple Intervention, instigated by China, the Chinese were now obligated to disburse huge sums of money. Russia was the first creditor to demand payment.

In May 1896, about a year after the 1st Sino-Japanese War, Russia invited Li Hongzhang to Moscow for the coronation of Emperor Nicholas II. The Russians entertained him grandly. During Li's sojourn, Finance Minister Sergei Witte approached him, saying "The Japanese are certain to attempt to recapture the Liaodong peninsula. I propose that we conclude an offensive and defensive alliance." As a result, Li and Foreign Minister Lobanov signed the Li-Lobanov Treaty in June of 1896.

The treaty pledged mutual support in the event that Japan invaded Russia, China, or Korea. According to its main provisions, China would allow the Russians to construct a railroad crossing Manchuria with Vladivostok as its terminal, to facilitate the transport of Russian troops. In the event of war against Japan, Russia would be permitted to use the railroad for military purposes. The Russo-Chinese Bank was established for the purpose of building the railway, as was the Chinese Eastern Railway Company.[1]

Despite the fact that the proposed railroad was to be built on Chinese territory, the Chinese Eastern Railway Co. was not required to pay taxes on income from it or the land it traveled over. Also, the company would enjoy absolute and exclusive authority over that land. Thus began Russia's conquest of China through the establishment of railroads and a bank. Construction on the Chinese Eastern Railway commenced in August 1898, and eventually connected with the Trans-Siberian Railway, on which construction had begun in 1891. The railway would provide the shortest journey to Transbaikal and Vladivostok. It was completed in October 1901, and began operating in July 1903. It served as the vehicle for Russian encroachment on Manchuria, and served as a crucial medium for the incubation of the Russo-Japanese War.

Vivisection of China

Once Russia had reaped the rewards of the Triple Intervention, other powers followed suit. Germany was first to act; in November 1897 it sent a battleship to Jiaozhou Bay, using the murder of two German missionaries in Shandong province as a pretext. In the following year, in collusion with Russia, Germany extracted a 99-year lease on Jiaozhou Bay from the Chinese, as well as railroad-construction and mining rights in Shandong.

[1] The Japanese did not learn of this secret treaty until the Washington Naval Conference in 1922 (see Chapter 6.2).

Russia had kept abreast of German activities and, wasting no time, sent troops to the Liaodong peninsula in December 1897, occupying Port Arthur and Dalian Bay. Then, using the excuse that they were protecting China from the encroachment of other nations, the Russians demanded a long-term lease on Port Arthur, Dalian and their hinterlands. By "other nations," the Russians meant Japan. The Chinese complied with Russian demands, and in March 1898 Russia acquired 25-year leases on Port Arthur and Dalian (the extension of those leases was to be decided at negotiations to be held at a later date). Soon thereafter Russia acquired the right to extend the Chinese Eastern Railway to Dalian, thus fulfilling its long-cherished desire for an ice-free port. The ever-greedy Russians soon succeeded in extending the scope of their lease to the entire Liaodong peninsula. Only three years earlier they had forced Japan to return the peninsula to China, using the excuse that Japanese possession of it would threaten lasting peace in the Far East. Now, as a reward for its interference, the Russians had gobbled up the entire peninsula. Though these events were extremely frustrating to the Japanese, their only choice at that point was to observe them impassively.

France joined Russia in the scramble for Chinese spoils. In November 1898 it obtained a 99-year lease on Guangzhou Bay in South China. The UK entered the competition, acquiring a 99-year lease on the Kowloon peninsula in June of that same year, and acquired a lease on Weihaiwei in July to counter Russia's lease on Dalian.

Then, in 1898 the UK extracted a promise from the Chinese not to cede land on the coast of the Yangzi River, and France agreed to do the same with respect to Hainan Island, Guangxi and Yunnan provinces, as did Japan with respect to Fujian province, located across from Taiwan, thus embracing them in the various spheres of influence. An American historian referred to these ghastly usurpations as the "vivisection of China."[2]

The Triple Intervention, whereby China had asked Russia and its cohorts to restrain Japan, came at a very high price to China. Additionally, it ended up enmeshing the entire Far East, including Japan, in utter turmoil.

Here is the aforementioned Chinese historian Wang Yunsheng's opinion on the matter:

> Since the Triple Intervention was so clumsily handled, it invited the scourge of further partition, and furthermore served as the origin of many tragedies that later afflicted the world. When Qing court officials saw that one word from the three nations involved in the Triple Intervention sufficed to return Liaodong to them, their superstitions about Russia deepened further. Not only did they conclude that with Russia on its side, China had nothing to fear from Japan, but also that other powerful nations would avoid antagonizing Russia and keep their distance. By entering into a secret agreement with the Russians, Li Hongzhang was planting the seeds of the misfortune that was the Manchurian problem. He was also provoking fierce rivalry among the Western powers, and setting the scene for tragedy after tragedy: from the

[2] Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People*, 10th edition (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, ca 1980), 479.

> Boxer Rebellion, through the Russo-Japanese War, to the War in Europe, all of which are interconnected. China, originally fearful of anything and everything, ended up enmeshed in world chaos from which there was no escape.[3]

Wang argues that China's attempt to pit one barbarian against another, i.e, the Triple Intervention, especially the imprudence it demonstrated by depending upon help from Russia, was the primary cause of subsequent Asian turmoil. His view serves as an excellent historical treatise, providing as it does a glimpse into the background and nature of modern Far Eastern disputes. When three foreign, faraway powers intervened, it was China that tilled the soil, planted the seeds, and provided the breeding ground for the Manchurian Incident.

[3] Wang, *op. cit.*

2. US EXPANSION INTO THE PACIFIC; OPEN DOOR POLICY

US defines new borders

As stated above, 1898 was the year when the great powers greedily encroached upon China. The Americans did not participate in those rapacious activities, but 1898 represented a dramatic turning point for them as well. It was the year in which, as a result of the American victory in the Spanish-American War, Cuba became an American protectorate. Additionally, Spain ceded Puerto Rico to the US, thereby solidifying the foundation for US control of the Caribbean. The US also made gains in the distant South Pacific, extending its reach with the acquisition of Guam and the Philippines. Another bonus reaped from the Spanish-American War was increased momentum toward the annexation of Hawaii. In August Honolulu became the stage for an annexation ceremony; now it was the Stars and Stripes, not Hawaiian flags, that fluttered over Hawaiian government offices.

In 1850 the US Western border was the California coast. But in 1898 the American sphere of influence suddenly expanded into the South Pacific. The US defined a new border in Asia, a line drawn from Hawaii, through Guam, to the Philippines. A new era of American interest and intervention in the Far East had begun.

Hawaii becomes a US protectorate

It is common knowledge that the attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese Navy marked the opening of hostilities in the Greater East Asian War. However, we must give due consideration to destiny and its profound effect on Japan-US relations.

American interest in the Pacific Ocean probably began in 1872, when US Navy Captain Richard W. Meade II proposed establishing a US naval base at Pago Pago, on Tutuila, the main island of Samoa, and the US Secretary of the Army ordered a survey of Honolulu harbor to determine whether it was suitable for military purposes.

The survey revealed that Pearl Harbor (then called Pearl River) possessed great military value. The Americans asked the Hawaiian government to cede Pearl Harbor to the US, but the negotiations ended in failure when vigorous opposition was expressed by the Hawaiian people. Nevertheless, the US kept the pressure on Hawaii, and by means of the Reciprocity Treaty of 1875, the Americans gained the use of Pearl Harbor, as well as the authority to rebuild existing facilities and construct new ones. After annexation in 1898, Pearl Harbor gradually took on its modern appearance. Limitations imposed by the 1922 Washington Naval Treaty notwithstanding, fortifications in Hawaii and UK-controlled Singapore were allowed to remain.

Subsequently Hawaii acquired importance as an air base as well, and an airfield was constructed there at great cost. It became the most important American military outpost in the Pacific. The reason why, at the beginning of the Greater East Asian War, Pearl Harbor was the first target of the Japanese military, could certainly be traced to those aspects of Pearl Harbor's history.

The degree to which Hawaii had captured American political interest and determination is patently obvious from a directive sent by Secretary of State James G. Blaine to the U.S. minister to Hawaii.

> The situation of the Hawaiian Islands, giving them the strategic control of the North Pacific, brings their possession within the range of questions of purely American policy, as much so as that of the Isthmus itself. Hence the necessity, as recognized in our existing treaty relations, of drawing the ties of intimate relationship between us and the Hawaiian Islands so as to make them practically a part of the American system without derogation of their absolute independence.
>
> (…)
>
> The steady diminution of the native population of the islands … is doubtless a cause of great alarm to the government of the kingdom, and it is no wonder that a solution should be sought with eagerness in any seemingly practicable quarter. The problem, however, is not to be met by a substitution of Mongolian supremacy for native control … . The Hawaiian Islands cannot be joined to the Asiatic system. If they drift from their independent station it must be toward assimilation and identification with the American system, to which they belong by the operation of natural laws, and must belong by the operation of political necessity.
>
> (…)
>
> [The United States] firmly believes that the position of the Hawaiian Islands as the key to the dominion of the American Pacific demands their neutrality, to which end it will earnestly co-operate with the native government. And if, through any cause, the maintenance of such a position of neutrality should be found by Hawaii to be impracticable, this government would then unhesitatingly meet the altered situation by seeking an avowedly American solution for the grave issues presented.[1]

Obviously, the US was determined to occupy Hawaii rather than allow it to escape from the American sphere of influence into that of Asia (in other words, Japan).

A little-known moment in history: King Kalakaua's plea to Japan

The directive issued by the Secretary of State reveals suspicions that ultimately led to an event now categorized as a little-known moment in the history of Japan-Hawaii relations.

In March 1881 Kalakaua, the king of Hawaii, happened to visit Japan, one of the destinations on an unofficial world tour. The Japanese gave him a warm, lavish welcome, but the little-known aspect of his visit was a confidential, informal conversation with Emperor Meiji held at the Akasaka Palace.

[1] Yoshimori Saneyuki, Hawaii wo meguru Nichi-Bei kankeishi (History of Japan-US relations with respect to Hawaii) (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjūsha, 1943); see also US Office of the Historian, "No. 401: Mr. Blaine to Mr. Comly, December 1, 1881 at https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1881/d405 (retrieved 11/2022).

King Kalakaua lamented the fact that in recent years the Polynesian population of Hawaii was decreasing in number, while the number of Caucasians was on the rise. Moreover, the whites were gaining more power in Hawaii as well. He was worried that the Hawaiian royal line would die out. The king made the following request of Emperor Meiji: "I have no choice but to seek the help of a powerful nation such as the Japanese empire. Hawaii is well suited to the cultivation of sugar cane. I am certain that if we invite Japanese people to settle in Hawaii, they will assimilate easily. They would be ideal for other reasons as well. With their guidance, industry will thrive, and a Japanese presence will help prevent the Polynesian population from declining and the white race from taking over. I hope Your Majesty will give due consideration to the situation I have described and help save Hawaii." After this impassioned plea, King Kalakaua added, "I have no offspring, but I do have a niece, Kaiulani, who is of noble character. I intend to designate her to succeed me as the ruler of Hawaii, and would very much like her to have an exceptional consort. I understand that Prince Yamashina Sadamaro[2] is a stellar member of the imperial family. I would greatly appreciate Your Majesty's blessing on a marriage between Prince Sadamaro and Princess Kaiulani."[3]

It was the fervent hope of the king, who feared the conquest of Hawaii by Americans, to prevent annexation by the US through a marriage that would join the Japanese and Hawaiian royal families.

Since this was a request that was completely without precedent, and an important one, Emperor Meiji considered it carefully. Nevertheless, the following year he sent an emissary to decline Kalakaua's proposal. The reasons given were that intermarriage between the Japanese imperial family and a foreign royal family had never taken place, and that Japan did not think it prudent to act in a manner that might seem to interfere in the American sphere of influence.

"I urge Japan to take the lead in establishing an Asian federation"

A detailed account of the confidential conversation between Emperor Meiji and King Kalakaua can be found in *Documents from the Meiji Era.* The dialogue took place on March 11, 1881; Foreign Minister Inoue Kaoru served as interpreter.

On that occasion the king made another request of Emperor Meiji regarding the urgent need to create an Asian federation. "The nations of Europe think only of their own interests. They do not care a bit about other nations' problems or difficulties. They collaborate in political scheming against the nations of Asia. As a result, the nations of East Asia are isolated, and in any case are not in the habit of engaging in political maneuvering against the nations of Europe. Today East Asian interests are controlled by the nations of Europe. Therefore, the urgent task for the East Asian nations is to form a federation that could protect all of East Asia, and enable it to hold its own against the European powers. The time is ripe for such an alliance."

[2] More commonly known as Prince Higashifushimi Yorihito.

[3] Yoshimori, *op. cit.*; Kurobane Shigeru, *Nichi-Bei kōsō shi no kenkyū* (A study of the history of disputes between Japan and the US (Tokyo: Nansōsha, 1973). [ask about 再引用].

Kalakaua added, “My country does not have the power to draft a grand plan. However, I have learned not only that the Japanese empire has not only made surprising progress, but also that its people are numerous and brave. Therefore, if an Asian federation is to be formed, it should be Your Majesty who takes the initiative and becomes its leader; I will do my utmost to assist Your Majesty in any way I can.” He urged Emperor Meiji to take the lead in forming an alliance that encompassed the nations of Asia, including Siam (Thailand), Persia (Iran), and India.

Having listened to the king’s plea, Emperor Meiji replied, “Our nation’s progress is not as great as it may seem. Since conflicts with China often arise and the Chinese are always plotting against Japan, it would be difficult to achieve a complete peace with China. It would be nigh impossible to accomplish Your Highness’ proposal. I would like to consider this carefully; I will consult with my ministers of state and reply later.”

According to *Documents from the Meiji Era*, in addition to the king’s proposal of an Asian federation, Emperor Meiji addressed two others presented by King Kalakaua: the construction of an undersea cable between Hawaii and Japan, and marriage between the king’s niece, Princess Kaiulani, and the Japanese Prince Sadamaro.[4]

Emperor Meiji responded as follows: “In the first place, it is quite clear that China would never accept Japanese leadership. Furthermore, the notion of a federation including nations such as Siam and India is unrealistic, as they are located at a great distance from Japan, and their languages and customs are quite different from ours. Moreover, as far as the laying of an undersea cable is concerned, an American has already proposed such an undertaking and Japan has promised to render assistance. Regarding the matter of marriage between the Japanese and Hawaiian royal families, such an arrangement is inadvisable, as it might prove to be the source of problems in the future.

In March 1882 the emperor entrusted his reply, written in his own hand, to the Imperial Household Agency’s Second Secretary Nagasaki Shōgo, who delivered it to King Kalakaua. The missive addressed only the matter of an Asian federation proposed by the king. The reply begins by saying that an enterprise such as an Asian federation is immense and far-reaching, and that the circumstances, as well as climates, languages, and customs of the nations of Asia, differ greatly. The emperor politely declined the suggestion that he become the leader of such a federation. “The more thought I give to this concept, the more difficult its achievement seems. Not to mention the fact that I could not shoulder the heavy burden of being its leader.” In 1890, when he was preparing for the inaugural Diet session and was dealing with a multitude of domestic problems, he said, “I wasted an entire morning contemplating the affairs of a foreign country instead of attending to my own obligations,” adding that it “would be difficult to make the Asian federation concept a reality.”

[4] Imperial Household Agency, ed. Meiji Tennō ki (Documents from the Meiji era) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1968-1977).

About the difficulties involved in a marriage between Prince Sadamaro and Princess Kaiulani, the matter of the undersea cable, and the immigration proposal, the emperor had Inoue Kaoru prepare a response and hand it to Nagasaki Shōgo for delivery.[5]

Judging from his entreaty to Emperor Meiji, King Kalakaua must have been a staunch advocate of Pan-Asianism. It is entirely possible that his proposal, however naïve, gave rise to the idea of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere, developed by Japan some years later.

Japan-led Pan-Asianism, whose purpose was to counter white imperialism, was viewed with envy and fear by the nations that most needed it: China and Korea, to name two. It is not hard to see the irony, the irony of history, in the fact that such an alliance was the fervent hope of the ruler of a kingdom located many thousands of miles away.

Obliteration of the Hawaiian Kingdom

King Kalakaua's desperate attempt to strengthen the bond between Japan and Hawaii to the point of forging a marriage contract with the Japanese royal family, in the hope of forestalling Western (especially American) encroachment on Hawaii, came to naught.

The king was terribly disappointed. If the marriage proposal had been approved, as he had hoped, Hawaii might have become Japanese territory, an extremely meaningful consequence.

In that case, the relationship between Japan and the US, as far as the Pacific region was concerned, might well have evolved in a totally different way. But since Emperor Meiji was loath to create friction with the US, Hawaii never became part of Japan, and was instead annexed by the US. In January 1893 the Americans sent a landing party of 150 sailors from the USS Boston to support white residents of Hawaii. Together they occupied Hawaiian government buildings and brought the rule of the Hawaiian monarchy to an end. How sad it was that a nation with no army was powerless to fend off American attackers numbering only 150 sailors and Marines. The Hawaiian flag, which had flown for 100 years, ever since King Kamehameha assumed the throne, was never to be seen again. The annexation took place five years later, in 1898. Japanese indifference and American obsession: that delicate equilibrium and ensuing events were the determining factors that shaped Hawaii's fate.

[5] Nabae Michiyasu, "*Hawai ōkoku kōtei no Meiji tennō to no onmitsudan ni tsuite; daitōa kyōeiken no shushō"* (Confidential conversation between King Kalakaua of Hawaii and Emperor Meiji concerning a greater East Asian coprosperity sphere" (Tokyo: Institute of Budo and Moral Education, March 1987); https://kokushikan.repo.nii.ac.jp/?action=repository_uri&item_id=7819&file_id=189&file_no=1 (retrieved 12/2022).

Open Door Policy

The time has come for a discussion of the Open Door Policy, without which our quest to define the Greater East Asian War would not be complete. That policy holds the key that reveals the essence of that conflict.

In 1899 US Secretary of State John Hay sent a note (referred to as the First Open Door Note) to six nations: the UK, Germany, Russia, Japan, Italy, and France. It was a declaration, whose main points were: (1) European powers with concessions and leases in China should not interfere with treaty ports or other nations' vested interests, and (2) no nation should receive unfavorable treatment with regard to tariffs and railroad charges in another nation's sphere of interest.

In other words, the US was advocating equal commercial opportunity for all six nations, as long as their spheres of influence in China endured. During the last half of the 19th century, the US had extended its borders into the distant Western Pacific, but had had no opportunity to join the European powers in the free-for-all for Chinese territory. The Open Door Policy was a new one drafted to ensure that US interests, threatened by the establishment of European spheres of influence in China, were safeguarded.

However, the Open Door Policy, premised on the existence of European spheres of influence in China, soon expanded and transmuted. It then became the core of dissension between Japan and the U.S., which culminated in the Greater East Asian War. Here I will offer a brief explanation.

In 1900, after the First Open Door Note was issued, the Boxer Rebellion erupted in China. As each nation represented in the Allied forces sent troops to suppress it, the danger that China might be partitioned increased. Secretary Hay thereupon issued the Second Open Door Note, sent to the same six powers, which underscored the principles outlined in the first note, but also included a new proposal advocating not only equal commercial opportunity beyond spheres of influence, but also the preservation of Chinese territorial and administrative integrity.

American historian Paul Clyde made the following remarks about the expansion of the content and scope of application of the Open Door Policy:

> The principle of the territorial integrity of China has been confused with the doctrine of the "Open Door" and by many considered an integral part of the doctrine. Failure on the part of critics to define the doctrine clearly has led to such confusion that careless writers have characterized actions which had nothing to do with the "Open Door," as violations of the doctrine.[6]

[6] Paul H. Clyde, *International Rivalries in Manchuria* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1928), 168; https://ia804701.us.archive.org/33/items/in.ernet.dli.2015.12326/2015.12326.International-Rivalries-In-Manchuria-1689-1933_text.pdf (retrieved 12/2022).

Without a doubt, the difference between the Japanese and American interpretations of the Open Door Policy was instrumental in forming important points of issue that developed into dissension and antagonism between Japan and the US, in the Far East.

Collision between *special* and *prevailing*

What was at the crux of the controversy surrounding the Open Door Policy? Since the Meiji era, Japan's China policy was built around protecting and maintaining the special interests and special status it had accumulated on the Asian continent, particularly in South Manchuria, having risked its national destiny through wars with China and Russia and subsequent efforts, all of them laborious. The word *special*, as in "special interests" and "special status" implied not only geographical proximity but also a considerable amount of historical sentiment.

In contrast, the American Open Door Policy championed equal commercial opportunity and complete territorial and administrative integrity in all of China. Therefore, there was bound to be friction between that policy and the concept of special interests or special status. Certainly, when John Hay advocated the Open Door Policy, spheres of influence in China represented the *prevailing* situation, the standard of the times. The Open Door Policy, in principle, favored the special within the context of the standard. However, given the vicissitudes of Japanese-American relations, with the year 1921, when the Washington Naval Conference took place as a turning point, an "expanded" interpretation of the Open Door Policy rendered the special status claimed by Japan as special in the true sense of the word, i.e, nonstandard.

In the battle between Japan's China policy, which centered on the preservation of its special status, and American Far Eastern policy, Japan was at a distinct disadvantage. One of the combatants was engaged in a life-and-death struggle for the survival of its people, while the other, already in possession of far more than it needed, was assuming a paternalistic role. In the eyes of most people, the latter combatant seemed to be behaving correctly, even virtuously. Political scientist Hanabusa Nagamichi argued that where Manchuria was concerned, American diplomacy was disingenuous: at times, the US sought honor, i.e., righteousness, in defending the Open Door Policy; at other times. it sought to profit from it. However, most of the actions the US took with respect to Manchuria were intended to convince a third party (any third party) that it was the victim. For instance, the Americans condemned Japan when the Manchurian Incident occurred, maintaining that it was a violation of the Open Door Policy.[7]

Because the substance of the Open Door Policy was significantly expanded and underwent alterations, differences arose in the way it was interpreted by the Japanese and the Americans. Furthermore, those differences in interpretation and even understanding were never resolved. Some consequences: (1) the Open Door Policy inspired US Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan to initiate his "non-recognition policy" when Japan issued the Twenty-One Demands to China in 1915; (2) it came to represent the central standpoint in the Nine-Power treaty, concluded

[7] Hanabusa Nagamichi, *Manshūkoku to monko kaihō mondai* (Manchuria and the Open Door Policy problem) (Tokyo: Nihon Kokusai Kyōkai, 1934).

at the Washington Naval Conference in 1922; it supplied grounds for Secretary of State Henry Stimson's "non-recognition" argument when the Manchurian Incident occurred in 1931, (4) it became an excuse for US condemnation of Japan when the 2nd Sino-Japanese War broke out, and (5) it was incorporated into the Americans' rigid insistence on respect for principles during negotiations with US Secretary of State Cordell Hull in 1941, as well as in the demands in the Hull Note, which triggered the outbreak of hostilities between Japan and the US. Moreover, at the postwar IMTFE (International Military Tribunal for the Far East), the Open Door Policy was cited as the fundamental philosophy behind the Nine-Power Treaty, one of the pacts Japan was charged with having violated.

Though the structure of the Open Door Policy transmuted with the times and with circumstances, its fundamentalism continued to serve as the major point of contention in the Far East between Japan and the US, one that was never reconciled, and as the undercurrent at the heart of the 50-year conflict between the two nations. The Open Door Policy is the problem that offers the most consequential viewpoint to contemplate when we consider the evolution of the Japan-US relationship over a half-century, and the historical background of the Greater East Asian War.

CHAPER 3: THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

3. RUSSIA'S SOUTHWARD ADVANCE; ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE

Japan and the Boxer Rebellion

Just as the Donghak Peasant Revolution set the scene for the 1st Sino-Japanese War, the Boxer Rebellion did likewise for the Russo-Japanese War.

The Boxers were a secret religious society descended from the White Lotus Sect, founded during the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368). They were practitioners of *yihuequan*, a style of boxing whose mastery, according to superstitions of the times, enabled them to fend off sword thrusts and even bullets.

In 1899 the Boxers, united behind the slogan "Help the Qing, annihilate foreigners," launched a xenophobic campaign in Shandong province. In 1900 they expanded their operations to Zhili (today Hebei) and Shanxi provinces, and even to Manchuria. They killed Christians, and destroyed churches, railroads, electric cables – anything and everything of foreign provenance. However, it was their destruction of the railroads that sent shock waves through China and the rest of the world as well. Toward the end of April, the Boxers entered Beijing. Unfortunately, Empress Dowager Cixi sympathized with them and schemed to once again grasp state power through their efforts. The Boxers began to run even more rampant. When June came, they murdered both Sugiyama Akira, a clerk at the Japanese Legation, and Clemens von Ketteler, a German diplomat. Sugiyama's body was dismembered and his heart gouged out, yet another instance of Chinese atrocities.

Also in June, the Boxers surrounded the Legation Quarter of Beijing and Emperor Guangxu issued an edict (essentially a declaration of war) to the foreign powers. In July Boxers and Chinese troops, whose numbers had reached several tens of thousands, were still besieging the Legation Quarters. The situation had become desperate. To rescue the more than 4,000 diplomats, foreign residents, bodyguards, and Christians, all at their wits' end, the foreign powers' hopes turned to the mobilization of Japanese troops, due to Japan's proximity to China. Ishii Kikujirō, second secretary at the Japanese legation, and also a victim of the siege of Beijing, kept a record of his experiences. He wrote that at that time Russia, hoping that all persons under siege would be annihilated, therefore providing it with an excuse to occupy Manchuria, vetoed every request for Japanese help.[1]

The Japanese assumed a cautious stance, as they were loath to invite the suspicion of other nations. But after the UK had asked them, four times, to send troops, they acquiesced and dispatched the 5th Infantry Division. That division formed the mainstay of the Eight-Nation Alliance, which removed the stranglehold on the Beijing Legation Quarter on August 14. The Alliance's troops numbered approximately 20,000; half of their number was accounted for by Japanese soldiers. On August 15 the empress dowager and Guangxu fled from Beijing and sought refuge in Xian.

[1] Ishii Kikujirō, *Nihon gaikō hiroku* (Confidential Japanese diplomatic records) (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1934).

The Boxer Protocol was concluded in September 1901. The pact was signed by 11 nations and China, thus settling the rebellion. According to the protocol, China was required to pay 450 million taels. Additionally, each of the foreign signatories was permitted to station troops in 12 locations, including Langfang, Tianjin, Tanggu, Lutai, and Shanhaiguan, a right that would later prove to be very meaningful. In 1937 Chinese troops illegally fired upon a Japanese unit, stationed at Liugou Bridge in accordance with permission granted in the protocol.

Japanese military discipline wins praise

The Boxer Rebellion provided the first opportunity for the Japanese military to fight alongside the soldiers of foreign nations. Their bravery and strict discipline on that occasion earned them praise from all over the world. Japanese losses during the assault on Tianjin in early July were especially numerous. Of approximately 600 Alliance casualties, more than 250 were Japanese; 50 of the 51 soldiers killed in action were Japanese. After Tianjin fell, Alliance soldiers from other nations went on a rampage, looting, setting fires, and raping wherever they went, but very few Japanese soldiers engaged in such violent acts. Chinese residents of Tianjin showed their gratitude by displaying Japanese rising-sun flags with slogans like "We submit to the authority of the Japanese empire" written on them.[2]

Moreover, the news that the Japanese had served as the mainstay of the effort to rescue the Legation Quarter, then under siege, soon traveled throughout the world, garnering accolades for the Japanese. According to *Beijing Ablaze*, British newspapers unanimously sang the praises of the Japanese. An editorial in the 28 August 1900 edition of the London Times read "The entire world is grateful to the Japanese for their rescue of the Legation Quarter. The nations of the world have Japan to thank for saving them from the humiliation of having their diplomatic corps massacred or their flags desecrated. Japan is an entirely worthy partner of the Western nations." The Standard, a British newspaper, carried an editorial on August 18 stating, "Everyone will tell you that any honor arising from the quelling of the Boxer Rebellion belongs to the Japanese military. The unrivaled perseverance, discipline, and bravery of the Japanese soldiers deserve our highest praise." Japanese efforts to relieve the siege may very well have set the scene for the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

After the rescue of the Legation Quarter, the Alliance forces divided the city of Beijing into quarters, each administered by a different nation. In the Japanese quarter, there was excellent public order. According to Irish journalist George Lynch, "The English and American were better than the French or Russian quarters, but a long way behind the Japanese."[3]

Worst of all was the Russian quarter; since there was no military discipline, the Russian soldiers became thugs, killing, setting fires, and raping, wreaking havoc wherever they went. Their acts of violence were so terrible they were considered fates worse than death. Rather than become victims,

[2] Eiko Woodhouse, *Pekin moyu: Giwadan Jihen to Morison* (Beijing ablaze: the Boxer Rebellion and Morrison) (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shinpōsha, 1989).

[3] George Lynch, *The War of the Civilisations: Being the Record of a "Foreign Devil's" Experiences with the Allies in China* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1901), 138.

some Chinese residents committed suicide by jumping from buildings; others drowned or hanged themselves. The Russians often kill the unfortunate women whom they raped when they were finished with them.

> At a point where the Russian territory touched the Japanese … a perfect stream of poor people carrying bundles and staggering under tables, chairs and beds were moving into the Japanese quarter.
>
> (…)
>
> The population of the Japanese quarter was being rapidly increased by migration from the Russian. The latter thereupon prohibited those leaving from carrying their goods away with them; yet still the Chinese went, leaving all their belongings behind them rather than endure the horrors of life in the Russian quarter.[4]

In despair, Lian Fang, mayor of Beijing, appealed to British diplomat Claude MacDonald, describing atrocities committed by Russian troops: "The Russians are killing Chinese men, and raping our women. To escape the humiliation of being raped, many women and girls are killing themselves. I beg you to arrange for the Japanese to take over administration of the Russian quarter."[5]

Although the Japanese had made the greatest contribution to the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion and the liberation of the Legation Quarter, they were not vociferous in demanding material benefits, i.e., reparations. It was the Russians who made the most excessive demands, despite the fact that they had not only obstructed the attempt to rescue those under siege, but also had provided only 40% of the troops that Japan did in the effort to save Beijing. They demanded 29% of the reparations. Next came Germany (20%), which did not even participate in the liberation of Beijing. Third was France (16%), which had deployed only half the men that Japan had, fourth was the UK (11%), and fifth, Japan (7.7%).

Unlike the Russians and Germans, who engaged in ugly bickering for the lion's share, Japan's restraint during the jockeying for reparations earned it the gratitude and trust of Chinese hearts and minds. Soon there was a marked increase in the number of Chinese studying in Japan.

The Heilongjiang tragedy

When the Boxer Rebellion spread to Manchuria, the Russians mobilized a great many soldiers from Siberia and Port Arthur, maintaining that they were needed to protect the Chinese Eastern Railway, then under construction. The invasion commenced in July 1900; by October they had occupied all of Manchuria. Russian troops committed unspeakable atrocities in Manchuria. They attacked and occupied towns and villages that had absolutely no connection with the railroad, and slaughtered thousands of innocent Manchurians. It was during this period that the Russians

[4] Lynch, *op. cit.*, 137.

[5] Woodhouse, *op. cit.*

massacred inhabitants of 64 villages east of the Amur River in one of the bloodiest incidents in the history of the Far East.
Historian Wada Sei described that incident in a treatise entitled "The Plight of 64 Villages East of the River." The 64 villages were a group of villages along the bank of the Amur River (Heilongjiang) opposite the Aihui district in Northern Manchuria. From north to south they stretched out over 90 kilometers south of Blagoveshchensk, covering 50 kilometers east to west. They were situated on the banks of the Amur River where it meets the Zeya, in an area blessed with fertile soil. Han Chinese residents of Manchuria inhabited those villages, and since they were on the east bank of the Amur River, the area that comprised them was called "the 64 villages east of the river." Viewed from Manchuria, they were located on land "outside the Amur River." But according to the Treaty of Aigun, concluded in 1868, designating territory north of the Amur River as belonging to Russia, this was Chinese territory, and Manchurians enjoyed the right to live there in perpetuity; Russian infiltration was prohibited.

In July 1900, after the Boxer Rebellion arose, and even before they invaded Manchuria, Russian troops drove more than 10,000 residents out of the 64 villages at bayonet point in one of the greatest tragedies of the 20th century.[6]

At that time Ishimitsu Makiyo was in Blagoveshchensk under orders from Headquarters of the General Staff. Ishimitsu was an eyewitness to the massacre; he described what he had seen and heard in his journal, later published as *Flowers of the Wasteland*. "It was the worst massacre in the history of East Asia. On that day it seemed as though a monstrous mechanism had raised the curtain on a bloody struggle."[7] Without a doubt, the massacre was the prelude to brutal conflicts in East Asia, beginning with Russian incursions into Manchuria and Korea, and continuing with the Russo-Japanese War.

The nation of Japan was horrified by the massacre, which inspired several works of poetry. For instance, Doi Bansui expressed his outrage and despair in a long poem entitled *Tragedy on the Amur River*, an excerpt from which follows.

Immense river
Rolling along for 4,000 Russian miles
And ending in the Strait of Tartary
Eternal waves,
Bear witness!

In the year 1900 your waters became graves.
In those waters five thousand blameless lives
Were lost,
Transformed into ghostly spirits.

[6] Wada Sei, *Kōtō rokujūshi ton no mondai ni tsuite* (The plight of 64 villages east of the Amur River) (Tokyo: Seikatsusha, 1942).

[7] Ishimitsu Makiyo, *Kōya no hana* (Flowers of the wasteland) (Tokyo: Chūkō Bunko, 2017).

Aggrieved by those loathsome deeds
Flowers will never bloom on your banks again.

From that day on
Your green waters and the map of East Asia
Will forever be stained blood-red.[8]

The aftermath of the massacre

In 1902 the Russians and Chinese signed the Agreement Between Russia and China with Regard to Manchuria, which I will discuss in more detail later. Though the Russians had agreed to return all Manchurian territory south of the Amur River, they failed to return the 64 villages east of the river to China. The five or six thousand homesick villagers who had hoped to return to their native land assembled at Aihui, but all they could do was gaze at the landscape, filled with disappointment. When Japan defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War, the Chinese asked again and again for the return of the 64 villages. But the Russians not only ignored those requests, but also resettled waves of Russians, both military personnel and civilians, in those areas. Their adamant justification: "Since the Chinese residents left the area, it has become the home of Russian settlers; we cannot return it." Even though it was they who had driven them out, the Russians had the gall to suggest that the original residents had abandoned their villages.

This was the same shamelessness that prompted the Russians, by then the Soviets, after the Greater East Asian War, to expel Japanese residents from the Northern Territories (Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands), and populate their land with Soviets.

Recorded history tells us that the transition from imperialism to socialism did not alter the Russian mentality one iota.

After the demise of the Qing dynasty in 1912, Zhang Zuolin's Manchurian government once again requested the return of the 64 villages. After the Russian Revolution, the Soviet government twice (in 1919 and 1920) issued a Karakhan Manifesto, which stated that the Russians would return territory usurped from China during the imperial era. Consequently, believing that Soviet intentions were good, the Chinese Nationalist government negotiated for the restoration of the 64 villages, but the USSR dismissed their requests. The villages were swallowed up by the USSR and have remained Russian territory to this very day.

Russia defaults on treaty with China

When the Russians occupied Manchuria, they had the audacity to Russify the names of towns, revealing for all to see that they intended their occupation to be permanent. Even after the Boxer Rebellion had been suppressed, the Russians did not withdraw their troops, thus violating the Boxer Protocol. They attempted three times to conclude a secret treaty with China that would have

[8] Doi Bansui, "Kokuryūkō jō no higeki" (Tragedy on the Amur River) in *Doi Bansui shishū* (Collected poems of Doi Bansui) (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1952).

made Manchuria a Russian protectorate. However, those efforts ended in failure in the face of staunch opposition from Japan, the UK, and the US. The signing of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which I shall discuss later, in January 1902 boosted Chinese morale, and at the same time, put pressure on Russia. Consequently, the Agreement Between Russia and China with Regard to Manchuria was signed and sealed in April 1902.

According to that agreement, the Russians were to withdraw their troops from Manchurian territory they had occupied, in three stages. The first withdrawal, over six months, was to be from southwestern Shenyang (later Fengtian, today Liaoning) province. Over the next six months they were to withdraw from the remainder of Shengjing province and from Jilin province. Over the third six-month period, they were to withdraw from Heilongjiang province.

If the Russians had honored their agreement with China, there would have been no Russo-Japanese War. The Japanese would not have expanded into Manchuria, nor would they have annexed Korea. Adhering to a single treaty would certainly have changed the history of the Far East — there might have been peace instead of chaos and upheaval. But to the dismay of all those who yearn for justice and peace, once the Russians had occupied an area, they refused to relinquish their hold on it. Not once did they peacefully return occupied territory to its owners, not during the days of imperialism, and not during the life span of the Soviet Union. The Agreement Between Russia and China with Regard to Manchuria was no exception. Russian promises and Russian intentions were diametric opposites.

The Russians did complete the first stage of the withdrawal. But as far as the second stage was concerned, not only did they not withdraw their troops, they also increased troop strength in the area between Fengtian and the Manchuria-Korea border, thus declaring their ambition to subsume Greater Mongolia and Zhili (Hebei) province, along with Manchuria, into their sphere of influence.

Russian encroachment on Korea

It was at about this time that the Russians openly expressed their intention to invade Korea. First they occupied Yongampo, located at the mouth of the Yalu River, saying that they wanted to protect the forests there. Then, in July 1903 they sent troops into Korea and forced the Koreans to sign an agreement giving Russia a concession in Yongampo. After receiving strong objections from Japan, the Korean government announced that it had abrogated the agreement. But the Russians ignored the notice of annulment and began constructing a fortress in Yongampo, which they christened Port Nicolai, implying that their appropriation of Yohgampo was a fait accompli. The Koreans were helpless to stave off Russian encroachment.

Some Russian leaders were apprehensive about and critical of Russia's adventurist policies. One of them was Sergei Witte, Russia's finance minister, who wrote the following in his memoirs.

> The Japanese, of course, have gotten wind of this dangerous mission [Russia's plan to take control of Korea]. They are aware that Russia is creating the outward impression that it has withdrawn from Korea, but in reality, continues to harbor ambitions to occupy that nation. I must concede that it is with good reason that the Japanese have become exceedingly hostile toward us. Our occupation of the Liaodong peninsula and subsequent use of the Boxer Rebellion as an excuse to send

> troops to Manchuria, and our failure to withdraw those troops have caused China to completely lose faith in Russia. The same is true of Japan. If only we had adhered faithfully to the agreement with Japan, and had not conspired to take over Korea, the Japanese would have been reassured and would not have turned against us. However, we expelled the Japanese from the Liaodong peninsula, and occupied it ourselves. Furthermore, in return we concluded an agreement [concerning Korea] with the Japanese, but then violated it using treacherous means. It is more than understandable that the Japanese distrust Russia.[9]

Since this is testimony from a prominent Russian politician who stated that Russian designs on Korea caused the Russo-Japanese War, we must consider it a historical resource of great consequence.

The Anglo-Japanese Alliance and its significance

Following Japan's reluctant accession to the Triple Intervention, there were arguments in favor of two courses of action within the Japanese government with respect to countering Russian encroachment on the Far East. The first was to mitigate Russian aggression via a compromise, i.e., a treaty with Russia. The second was to enter into an agreement with the UK, with which Japan shared a goal, namely, to put a stop to Russia's southward aggression. A group led by Itō Hirobumi and Inoue Kaoru favored the first; Prime Minister Katsura Tarō and Foreign Minister Komura Jutarō favored the second, believing that Russia would not be satisfied with occupying Manchuria, and was sure to invade Korea, and that any understanding reached between Japan and Russia would have only a temporary effect. After some twists and turns, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was signed in London on January 30, 1902. The gist of the treaty follows.

(1) Both nations recognize the independence of China and Korea. The UK has political and economic interests in China, while Japan has the same interests in Korea. If those interests are threatened by domestic disturbances in China or Korea, or by the aggressive action of a third-party nation, either party to the treaty has the right to take the necessary measures to safeguard those interests (Article 1).
(2) If either the UK or Japan goes to war with a third-party nation in order to protect its interests, the other party to the treaty shall maintain neutrality and prevent other nations from opening hostilities against its ally (Article 2).
(3) If a third-party nation enters into a conflict with the UK or Japan, the other party to the treaty shall come to the aid of its ally (Article 3).

The Anglo-Japanese Alliance lifted the spirits of the Japanese people. It also proved to be a hidden source of support during Japan's confrontations with Russia, and its role in dissuading the French from entering the war on Russia's side cannot be overestimated.

According to diplomat Ishii Kikujirō, "the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was a near-perfect treaty. Both the Japanese and British believe that strict adherence to promises made is of great importance.

[9] Sergei Witte, *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, ed. Sidney Samuel Harcave (London: Routledge, 1990).

That particular trait was tested and proven during the life of the treaty. Because the treaty clearly conveys how crucial it is to both signatories, neither party has failed to fulfill its responsibilities. I suspect that no other treaty of this caliber exists."[10]

I do not believe that anyone would question my conclusion that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was the greatest possible pillar of support for Japanese diplomacy for the next 20 years. It certainly served as a silent source of strength for Japan during the Russo-Japanese War. The fact that the hostilities did not spread beyond those two nations was due to the fact that the UK adhered to the promises it made in the treaty and strictly kept a close watch on France, an ally of Russia, and prevented it from joining in the hostilities.

In the international struggle for supremacy in Manchuria subsequent to the Russo-Japanese War, Japan was careful to be in close communication with the UK at all times, and the UK, in return, became a strong advocate for Japan. This relationship prevented the struggle from worsening. Japan's subsequent sudden expansion in the Far East and the Pacific between the conclusion of the treaty and the close of World War I, would not have been possible without the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The US soon began to view this treaty with displeasure, and it eventually was terminated, under circumstances that I shall discuss later. When looking back at history, we must remember that together with the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Japan prospered, having become one of the world's first-rank nations. But we must also recollect with regret that after that treaty was terminated, a now isolated Japan found itself in distress, bound for a destiny replete with vicissitudes.

[10] Ishii Kikujirō, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, Willam Langdon, ed. and trans. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1936).

4. JAPAN BATTLES RUSSIA IN DESPERATE STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL

Negotiations with Russia break down

Now I shall resume my discussion of the fraught relationship between Japan and Russia. In August 1903 it became obvious that Russia had designs on both Manchuria and Korea. Therefore, Japan opened negotiations, which lasted for five months, until January of 1904, with Russia. The essentials of Japan's requests of Russia, made during those negotiations, were as follows.

(1) Russia must respect the independence and territorial integrity of China and Korea, and agree to equal commercial opportunity for Japan and Russia in both nations.
(2) Russia must recognize the supremacy of Japanese interests in Korea, and Japan must recognize Russian special interests relating to railways in Manchuria.
(3) Russia must recognize the fact that Japan has the exclusive right to offer advice about reforms and good government, and to provide assistance (including military assistance) to Korea.

Russia had no good reason to object to any of the above requests. Nevertheless, the Russians presented counterproposals, as shown below.

(1) Russia will respect the territorial integrity of Korea. However, Russia will not negotiate about Manchuria, as it is not within the Japanese sphere of influence.
(2) Russia recognizes Japanese assistance to Korea only if such assistance is not military; Japan may not use Korean territory for strategic purposes.
(3) Korean territory north of the 39th parallel should be considered a neutral zone.

By refusing to negotiate about the independence and territorial integrity of Manchuria, by prohibiting Japan from sending troops to Korea, and furthermore, by creating a neutral zone in northern Korea, the Russians were assuming that they had free rein in Manchuria, which was taking a great deal for granted.

In response, Japan proposed the following:

(1) Russia must respect the independence and territorial integrity of China and Korea.
(2) If Manchuria is to be considered outside Japan's sphere of influence, then there must be reciprocal recognition that Korea is outside Russia's sphere of influence.
(3) If a neutral zone is to be established, it should include not only Korea, but also 50 kilometers on each side of the Manchuria-Korea border.
(4) Russia must recognize Japan's right to provide military assistance to Korea

A comparison of demands issued by both nations clearly reveals the spirit of compromise and reciprocity that distinguishes the Japanese proposals.

If the Russians had been prepared to compromise, tensions might very well have eased, but they refused to back down. Moreover, during the negotiations, the Russians were frantically preparing for war, issuing mobilization orders to their troops in the Far East and imposing martial law in

Manchuria. On January 13, 1904, the Japanese submitted their final proposal to Russia. Even after three weeks, there was no reply from the Russians, who were busily completing war preparations. On February 4 the Japanese decided to suspend communication and commence hostilities with Russia. On February 6, they notified the Russians that they were breaking off diplomatic relations.

Hostilities between Japan and Russia commence

The rupture of diplomatic relations between Japan and Russia marked the beginning of hostilities. On February 7, 1904 Combined Fleet Commander in Chief Tōgō Heihachirō departed from Sasebo. Early on the morning of February 9 the Japanese torpedoed the enemy fleet off Port Arthur, and inflicted grievous damage on three of its vessels. On the same day, the 4th Squadron, commanded by Rear Admiral Uryū Sotokichi, attacked and sank the Russian ships *Varyag* and *Korietz*. On February 10 an imperial edict declaring war against Russia was promulgated; Russia reciprocated on that same day.

Russia's condemnation of Japan and Japan's rebuttal

On February 18 in an official document, Russia condemned the Japanese Navy for having launched an attack before declaring war on Russia. On February 20 the Russians disclosed the particulars of the severance of diplomatic relations and the commencement of hostilities. The gist of their complaint was that breaking off diplomatic relations is not equivalent to a declaration of war. Therefore, since the Japanese declared war on February 10, prior attacks on Russian vessels were in violation of international law.

On March 2 Japan's Foreign Minister Komura responded, unofficially, via the domestic and foreign press, to Russian censure as follows:

> In an official document Russia maintains that Japan took advantage of Russia, a nation that was striving valiantly to preserve the peace, and won an unexpected victory through trickery. However, Russia's self-characterization as a peace-loving nation is false, because the Russians temporized needlessly during negotiations, all the while assiduously engaging in military expansion both on land and sea.[1]

Komura continued his vehement rebuttal by citing a multitude of instances in which the Russians had engaged in military expansion in the Far East since April 1903, when Russia reneged on its promise to execute the second phase of troop withdrawal from Manchuria.

> Who would have the temerity to claim that the Russians were not behaving like belligerents, or that they were not preparing for war? Japan, realizing that the situation was grave and that there was not one moment to spare, had no choice but to break off futile negotiations and take the measures necessary for self-defense. It was, without doubt, Russia that provoked hostilities, not Japan.[2]

[1] Gaimushō (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), *Komura gaikōshi, jōge* (History of Komura's diplomacy, 2 vols.) (Tokyo: Shinbun Gekkansha, 1953).

[2] *Ibid.*

About criticism of the Japanese for attacking Russian vessels prior to declaring war, Komura presented the following rebuttal:

> Japan ended talks with Russia on February 6. We then advised Russia that we would, independently, take whatever action we thought best to ward off threats to our position and our interests. We severed diplomatic relations and vacated the Japanese legation. "Independent action" can be interpreted in many ways, but it includes the commencement of belligerent acts. The Russians may be incapable of comprehending this fact, but whatever the case, it is certainly not Japan's responsibility to enlighten them. Furthermore, any scholar of international law will tell you that declarations of war are not necessary conditions for the opening of hostilities. Only in recent years has it become customary to issue a declaration of war subsequent to the commencement of hostilities.[3] Consequently, action taken by Japan was not in the least reprehensible within the realm of international law. Moreover, we find it exceedingly curious that criticism of this sort is emanating from Russia. There have been numerous instances throughout history in which none other than Russia has suddenly engaged in hostilities without issuing a declaration of war. Not to mention the fact that, in 1808, Russia sent troops to Finland at the very moment when diplomatic negotiations were taking place![4]

In *History of Komura's Diplomacy*, the author refers to an opinion lodged by the Irish scholar Dr. E.J. Dillon, who served as adviser to Sergei Witte. Apparently, Dillon was not overly critical of Japan, but by the same token, he did not have much to say in Japan's defense. Still, later on after he had discovered previously unknown facts about Russian history, he concluded, "Japan was condemned for having launched a surprise attack against the Russian fleet, and remains the target of criticism to this day for having done so. I have investigated the historical facts pertaining to that year as thoroughly as possible, and can now conclude with certainty that in wartime, just as in peacetime, the Japanese have always demonstrated moderation and chivalry at its finest. The claim that Russia has never launched a similar sort of surprise attack does not hold water. At the time in question, the Russian empire sent telegraphic instructions to the Guandong governor-general that read, in part, as follows: 'In the event that the Japanese fleet advances north of the 38th parallel north in western Korea, we shall attack it without waiting for the Japanese to fire the first shot.' That telegram is a valuable record, and it is very much extant."[5]

The telegram in question can be found in confidential Russian records of the time, where it was referred to as "Telegraphic Instruction No. 39." A later section of the telegram contains the following language: "In the event that Japanese warships support a landing force in western Korea, and that landing force advances north of the 38th parallel north, (Russia) shall attack it immediately without waiting for Japanese troops to fire the first shot.

---

[3] Not until 1907 was it made mandatory per the Convention Relative to the Opening of Hostilities concluded in The Hague to declare war prior to commencement of hostilities.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Gaimushō, *op. cit.*

At the time, the Japanese were not able to acquire this powerful piece of evidence, but the telegram demonstrates eloquently that the Russians had in fact already entered a state of war against Japan prior to declaring war.

Japanese gain great victories, both on land and sea

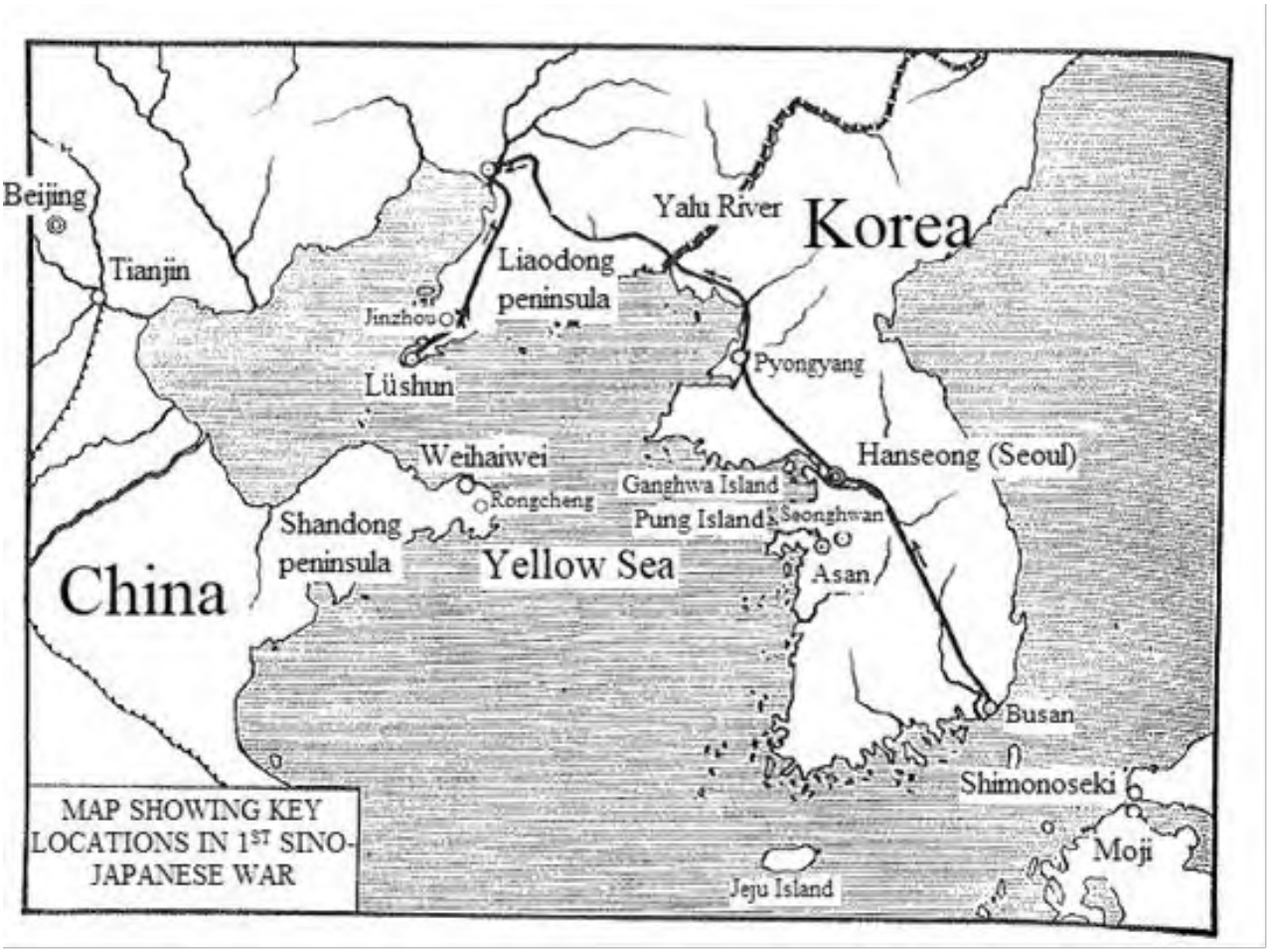
Now I shall provide an overview of the war situation after hostilities commenced.

(1) Battles of Liaoyang and Shahe

In March 1904, with Army Gen. Kuroki Tamemoto in command, the 1st Army landed at Chinnampo, Korea. The Japanese swept northern Korea of enemy troops, crossed the Yalu River, and then captured Jiuliancheng and Fenghuangcheng. In May, with Army Gen. Oku Yasukata in command, the 2nd Army landed at Yandaao on the Liaodong peninsula and took Jinzhoucheng on May 26. Within one day they occupied what the Russians had thought to be a semi-permanent stronghold in the steep hills of Nanshan. They then drove a wedge separating Russian Manchurian forces in the north and south. Advancing further northward to Delisi (Telissu), they defeated a large Russian army, which was advancing southward to bolster troops in Port Arthur. Advancing further, the 2nd Army had occupied Gaiping and Dashiqiao by July 25. Meanwhile, on June 20 Field Marshal Ōyama Iwao was appointed commander in chief of the Japanese Manchurian Army, and Army Gen. Kodama Gentarō, chief of staff. They established the 4th Army (commanded by Gen. Nozu Michitsura), which was ordered to proceed to the north, while remaining in communication with the 1st and 2nd armies. The northward advance of the three armies was marked by victory after victory, but the Japanese were kept at bay by the forces of enemy Commander in Chief Aleksey Kuropatkin. When it seemed that the Russians were about to go on the offensive, the 1st, 2nd, and 4th armies, under the command of Field Marshal Ōyama, launched a combined offensive on Liaoyang on August 30. On September 4, after six days of heavy fighting, the Japanese occupied Liaoyang. Russian troops, which had fled to Fengtian (Mukden), returned with reinforcements and launched a full-force attack. Consequently, the Japanese encountered a host of Russian troops at Shahe on October 10. After several days of fierce combat, the Japanese won yet another great victory.

(2) Japan achieves maritime control

As soon as the war erupted, the Japanese Combined Fleet made numerous attempts to destroy the enemy fleet at Port Arthur. Since at times the Russians left the harbor to attack Japanese transport ships, the Japanese blockaded Port Arthur three times (on February 20, March 26, and May 2). It was during the second blockade that Lt. Col. (then Maj.) Hirose Takeo died a heroic death. On April 13 the Japanese lured the Russian fleet out of the harbor and soundly defeated it. On that day *Petropavlovsk*, the enemy flagship, made contact with a Japanese sea mine and sank. The death of one of the world's leading strategists, Adm. Stepan Makarov, on that occasion severely dampened Russian morale. Subsequently, as the Japanese rear attack on Port Arthur progressed, Russian ships broke through the blockade and escaped from the harbor in an attempt to reach Vladivostok. The Japanese fleet succeeded in destroying them in the Yellow Sea. Among the enemy vessels that had managed to escape the Japanese and return to Port Arthur were some that had entered neutral ports, where they were disarmed. Others fled to Sakahalin, only to be sunk by Japanese vessels. Four enemy ships that had been berthed in Vladivostok often appeared in waters near Japan where they attacked and sank Japanese commercial vessels and troop ships. But in August Japan's 2nd Fleet



sank one of them and inflicted severe damage on two others. With that success, Japan had achieved complete maritime control.

(3) Fall of Port Arthur

In June 1904 the 3rd Army, under the command of Gen. Nogi Maresuke, set out to lay siege to Port Arthur. By August it had trapped the Russians within its defensive line several kilometers from the city of Port Arthur. At that point Emperor Meiji made it known to Commander Nogi that he wished to avoid a repetition of noncombatant casualties. (Emperor Meiji was referring to civilian casualties during the assault on Port Arthur during the Sino-Japanese War.) On August 16 Gen. Nogi sent an envoy to the enemy bearing a missive stating the wishes of the emperor and recommending that the Russians surrender. The message, addressed to Russian Commander Anatoly Stessel, was signed both by Gen. Nogi and Commander in Chief of the Combined Fleet Tōgō Heihachirō. However, the Russians refused to surrender, and on August 19 the Japanese began an all-out offensive. But the Russians had taken advantage of natural defenses and made use of the latest fortification-building techniques to create an impregnable fortress at Port Arthur. The Japanese sent out suicide squad after suicide squad, but each foray resulted in their annihilation. From time to time the Japanese would receive news of the Baltic Fleet's eastward progress. Moreover, the Japanese Navy could not continue its blockade of Port Arthur forever. It needed to seize Port Arthur quickly. On December 5, after intense fighting, the Japanese succeeded in capturing 203-Meter Hill, the Russians' most impenetrable stronghold. They then proceeded to

destroy enemy ships within the harbor by firing on them from that vantage point, and then captured several batteries in the vicinity. On January 1, 1905 Stessel surrendered, signaling the fall of Port Arthur. The opposing armies signed a capitulation agreement on January 2. When Port Arthur fell, Emperor Meiji praised Gen. Stessel for fighting so valiantly for his country, stating further that Stessel deserved a place of honor in the pantheon of warriors. The meeting between Gen. Nogi and Stessel, which took place on Janary 5 at Shuishiying, has been memorialized in song.

(4) Occupation of Fengtian (Mukden)

After the fall of Port Arthur, the 3rd Army continued its northward journey, joined up with the Japanese Manchurian Army, and headed for Fengtian. The Russian Gen. Kuropatkin, intent on redeeming himself after a series of shameful losses by pouring all his effort into this one battle, assembled his best troop strength at Fengtian. The ensuing battle involved a total of approximately 600,000 men; the front line stretched out for nearly 25 kilometers. Hostilities began in late February 1905. The fighting was fierce, but ultimately Japanese forces encircled the enemy, and on March 10, after casualties had mounted to 100,000 and 40,000 prisoners of war had been taken, the Japanese occupied Fengtian. The Battle of Fengtian was the largest land conflict fought during the Russo-Japanese War. At a later date March 10 was designated Army Commemoration Day.

(5) Battle of Tsushima

The Russian Navy had been on the defensive since the beginning of the war. However, in an attempt to reverse its declining fortunes, the Russians assembled the best of its Baltic Fleet and formed the Second Pacific Squadron, under the command of Adm. Zinovy Rochestvensky. The fleet set out from the military port Libau (today Liepaja) in Latvia in October 1904. It greeted the new year at Madagascar, and in early May rendezvoused with the Third Pacific Squadron. Later in that same month the two fleets reached the coastal waters of Japan. Since leaving their homeland, the Russians had sailed 20,000 kilometers, a distance equivalent to a journey halfway around the world; this prolonged passage lasted for more than six months. The Russians arrived with a total of 38 vessels. Waiting to attack them were the more than 40 vessels of Japan's Combined Fleet, which had completed exhaustive training maneuvers at Junhae Bay in Korea. Adm. Tōgō was certain that the Russian fleet's voyage would end at the Tsushima Strait. His intuition served him well, for at 4:45 a.m. on May 27, he received information from a patrol boat, *Shinano Maru*: "Enemy ships sighted." Commander Tōgō wired his first communiqué to Imperial General Headquarters: "In receipt of report that enemy ships sighted. Will sail at once and meet and destroy enemy near Okinoshima. Weather is fair but waves are high." He waited until the enemy fleet was at an appropriate distance, and then gave the order to engage the enemy, at the same time hoisting the famous Z flag high on the masthead of the flagship *Mikasa*. The flag had special significance: "The fate of the Empire rests on the outcome of this battle; let each man do his utmost." The time was 1:55 p.m. A fierce battle raged for two days, with Japanese ships sinking 21 Russian vessels, and destroying or damaging five others that eventually sank. Six Russian ships reached neutral ports where they were detained. Of the 38 vessels that made the journey to Tsushima, only one small cruiser and two destroyers managed to return to Vladivostok. The Japanese had obliterated the Baltic Fleet, but had lost only three torpedo boats. This battle determined, once and for all, the outcome of the Russo-Japanese War. In honor of this great victory, May 27 was designated Navy Commemoration Day.

(6) Occupation of Sakhalin

In early July the Japanese organized a Sakhalin Offensive Force, which completed its occupation of the entire island on July 31.

Conclusion of Treaty of Portsmouth

World powers made three attempts to broker peace talks between Japan and Russia.

The first attempt was made when Port Arthur fell to the Japanese. US President Theodore Roosevelt, with France serving as intermediary, encouraged the Russians to enter into peace talks with the Japanese. However, the Russians, still hopeful that their Baltic Fleet and Kuropatkin's several hundred thousand troops in Fengtian would prevail, declined his offer. The second attempt was made when Japan asked President Roosevelt to arrange for peace talks after it defeated Russia in the Battle of Mukden. Russia, however, having placed its last hope in the Baltic Fleet, demurred.

But the Japanese obliteration of the Baltic Fleet in the Battle of Tsushima provided the decisive momentum for peace talks. The Japanese did not wish to continue fighting. In any case, they had asked Roosevelt to arrange for peace talks soon after the war began. Now the US officially recommended such negotiations.

Peace talks began in August 1905 in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Representing Japan with plenipotentiary powers was Foreign Minister Komura; representing Russia, also vested with full powers, was former Finance Minister Witte. Negotiations hit a snag when the Russians objected strenuously to the conveyance of Sakhalin and to paying war reparations to Japan. However, they ended successfully when the Japanese withdrew their demand for reparations and the Russians consented to the transfer of southern Sakhalin to Japan.

The main points of the Portsmouth Treaty, signed on September 5, 1905, follow:

(1) Russia acknowledges that Japan possesses paramount political, military, and economic interests in Korea, and has the right to take measures it deems necessary for guidance, protection, and control in that nation.
(2) Both nations shall remove their troops from Manchuria within 18 months.
(3) Russia assigns the lease of the Liaodong peninsula to Japan, with the consent of the government of China.
(4) Russia transfers the South Manchuria Branch Line (between Changchun and Port Arthur) of the Chinese Eastern Railway, together with pertaining coal mines, to Japan.
(5) Russia assigns the portion of Sakhalin south of the 50^{th} degree of north latitude to Japan.

The conclusion of the treaty marked the end of a desperate struggle between Japan and Russia. By emerging victorious, the Japanese rescued Manchuria and Korea from the clutches of the Russians, and preserved Japan's own independence and security.

Chapter 3: The Russo-Japanese War

5. THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR AND THE JAPANESE PEOPLE

Dilemma faced by advocates of war with Russia: my country or myself

When it became clear that Russia was planning aggression against Manchuria and Korea, and that Japanese protests were futile in the face of Russian ambition, the Japanese people seethed with hostility toward the Russians. In June 1903 it became obvious that the Russians had not honored their promise to complete the second phase of troop withdrawal from Manchuria. Legal scholar and Tokyo University Professor Tomii Masaakira and seven other scholars reacted to this turn of events by preparing a memorandum urging that Japan initiate hostilities against Russia immediately, and submitting it to Prime Minister Katsura. In December, when negotiations with Russia stagnated, the Anti-Russia Society, chaired by Konoe Atsumaro, presented a written opinion to Emperor Meiji advocating the commencement of hostilities.

The Japanese people, who had been nursing the wounds caused by the Tripartite Intervention for 10 years, had exhausted their patience with abhorrent Russian behavior. Indicative of the extent to which the tide turned in favor of war with Russia was the fact that even *Yorozu Chōhō* (Morning News), which was owned by polymath Kuroiwa Ruikō, and had previously fiercely opposed war with Russia, did an about-face and declared itself in support of war. The story about how Uchimura Kanzō, Kōtoku Denjirō (Shūsui), and Sakai Toshihiko resigned when *Yorozu Chōhō* changed its tune is familiar to every Japanese. Why did the newspaper alter its stance? Kuroiwa Ruikō supplied the answer in that publication's pages on October 13, 1903, the day after the three men resigned.

> Is Yorozu Chōhō a bellicose publication?
>
> Three colleagues have departed from *Yorozu Chōhō*: Uchimura, Kōtoku, and Sakai. Is *Yorozu Chōhō* a bellicose publication? If I were compelled to provide a brief response, I would say, "No, absolutely not." In that case, why did my three pacificist colleagues feel compelled to depart from *Yorozu Chōhō*? Again, I cannot provide a simple answer. I ask readers to keep a cool head while contemplating this matter.
>
> Imagine a quarrel between husband and wife. A thief lurking in the vicinity overhears their angry voices. He senses an opportunity that should not be missed. The thief enters the house, steals valuables, and attempts to make off with them. Spying him, the married couple forgets their differences, and join forces to attack the intruder. Do they act so because of their emotional attachment to their home, or because they enjoy conflict? If we conclude that this married couple enjoys conflict, then we must conclude that *Yorozu Chōhō* enjoys conflict as well.

Kuroiwa went on to explain the difference between his stance and that of the three men who resigned.

> Is war unavoidable?
>
> Along with 50 million other loyal Japanese I am an ardent seeker of peace. We must assume that whatever our beliefs, every single inhabitant of this planet seeks peace.

> However, circumstances have changed suddenly, so much so that it may be impossible to avoid going to war. We must not censure our diplomats for their inability to sustain peace through negotiations.
>
> When it becomes perfectly clear that war cannot be avoided, we must face that fact. We must do our utmost to avoid mistakes. Instead, we should do all we can in aid of our government, devoting ourselves wholeheartedly to the war effort, so that we may protect our honor and interests, and achieve peace.
>
> Warfare against another state is conducted not only by our Army and Navy, but also by every citizen of our nation. All 50 million loyal Japanese must be prepared to join together and fight to the best of their ability. Our efforts will determine whether peace comes slowly or quickly.
>
> Since all diplomatic means have been exhausted, war cannot be avoided, just as when all medical means have been exhausted, death cannot be avoided. Attempts to avoid war now would be like attempts to stave off death. The time has come when we can no longer avoid war. And if we must fight, what is our duty as citizens of Japan? Should we disregard the fact that hopes for a diplomatic solution have vanished and that, for all intents and purposes, we have entered into a state of war, instead bemoaning diplomatic blunders and refusing to accept the notion of war? Or should we set aside our grudges against the negotiators for now, consider our nation's war our own war, and join together in using every possible means available to us to aid our nation? I personally have chosen the latter course of action.

The great majority of public opinion was in agreement with Kuroiwa. His editorial reflects the soul-searching and agony experienced by those who long for peace during their journey from pacificism to support for those who advocate going to war. It is wrong to dismiss those in favor of waging war against Russia as thoughtless, reckless nationalists. Faced with the threat of Russian aggression and the peril in which Japan found itself, the Japanese of the time overcame the ideological dilemma (my country or myself), arriving at the bold decision to go to war because the destiny of their nation was more important.

That ideological dilemma is still with us today, perhaps to an even greater degree. Suppose one nation's sovereignty, independence, and integrity are threatened by another nation, and it becomes clear that they cannot be preserved through peaceful negotiations or persuasion. That leaves no choice but to decide quickly whether to engage in warfare to protect those rights. Under those circumstances, true pacifists will become advocates of war. They will do so because they know that there will be no peace for them in a nation in which there is no integrity. Peace that exists within injustice is, after all, nothing but peace in slavery. It is inexcusable to facilely label those who have arrived at such a decision, after giving the matter careful consideration warmongers or militarists. It is the responsibility of a citizen of the modern world to summon up the generosity to form fair judgments of those who have gone through a contemplative process and suffered much anguish before they shifted from an untenable pacifist stance to one that favors war.

Kōtoku Shūsui's feeble argument against the war

Kōtoku and Sakai, who had abandoned *Yorozu Chōhō* because of its stance favoring war with Russia, founded the *Heimin Shinbun* (Commoner's News), an antiwar newspaper, on November

15, 1903. What were their reasons for opposing war? In the following year, soon after hostilities commenced, the Diet passed legislation increasing taxes. The *Heimin Shinbun's* reaction appeared in an editorial entitled "Lamenting the Tax Increase." Here is an excerpt:

> The words "for the war effort" are a potent anesthetic. A tax increase of ¥60 million, intended to bolster the war effort, is a massive burden indeed. But this is a burden that the citizens of Japan should not be forced to shoulder, even for the sake of the war. Why are we compelled to pay this tax? We are told that the increase is unavoidable. I find myself relating these very sad, though true, facts: the international wars of today, while benefiting a select few, disturb the peace of the general public, impair our well-being, and obstruct progress. Furthermore, for this war we must thank ambitious politicians for championing it, fame-hungry military men for rejoicing over it, and cunning speculators for praising it. Add to their numbers the hordes of newspaper reporters who follow them blindly and fall over each other in an effort to arouse and persuade innocent, citizens.[1]

Was the Russo-Japanese War in fact one that benefited "only a select few"? Did it really "disturb the peace of the general public and "impair our well-being"? We need not take the trouble to argue these points. As far as "obstructing progress" is concerned, this claim is incompatible with historical fact, which tells us in no uncertain terms that the war awakened the peoples of Asia, and provided encouragement to their independence movements. The argument that "ambitious politicians" and "fame-hungry military men" provoked the war completely baseless, but it is not worth rebutting, contradicted by the facts as it is.

Unsurprisingly and fortunately, the sensible citizens did not accept the simplistic antiwar opinions of Kōtoku Shūsui and his confederates. Because of the aforementioned editorial, the government withdrew the *Heimin Shinbun's* publishing privileges. But suppressing such ruinous, reckless assertions in a national crisis, i.e., on the brink of war, was a very reasonable step to take.

Irresponsible nonsense: "My brother, you must not die"

Those who wish to fuel antiwar sentiment about the Russo-Japanese War invariably cite a poem entitled "My brother, you must not die" by female poet Yosano Akiko. The poem appeared in the September 1904 issue of *Myōjō*, a literary monthly. Excerpts from the poem, dedicated to Yosano's younger brother, can be found in accounts of the Russo-Japanese War in virtually every high school history textbook in Japan.

It is hard to believe that such a poem saw the light of day at a time when Japan was fighting a war, one on whose outcome its future depended. The general tendency is to praise the work unconditionally as an expression of personal awakening or of candid human sentiment. However, though this poem is candid and audacious because it regards the sentiment of one human being as an absolute truth, it is nothing more than thoughtless, irresponsible, and self-indulgent whining, disregarding as it does both the gravity of the then-current state of affairs and Japan's destiny. Yosano Akiko was not the only person who was concerned about the safety of a loved one or family member. Hoping for the safe return of a relative who has gone to war, anyone, anywhere

[1] *Heimin Shinbun*, 13 March 1904.

in this world, in any age, would experience those exact same emotions. Yet it behooves a person of letters to show responsibility and humility when making such emotions public. Interestingly enough, poems Yosano produced some years later were more patriotic.[2] It is understandable that in the magazine *Taiyō* poet Ōmachi Keigetsu described Yosano as a traitor and a subversive.

Here is an excerpt from another poem, a long one entitled "Hundred-Prayer Pilgrimage."[3] Written by Ōtsuka Kusuoko, also a female poet, it appeared in *Taiyō*. Here is an excerpt.

When I take my first step, I think of my husband,
With my second step I think of my country.

With my third step I think, again, of my husband.
Oh, the guilt in a woman's heart!
…

If I were asked which is dearer to me,
My country or my husband,
I could not answer, only weep.[4]

This poem, too, is often cited as a denunciation of the Russo-Japanese War, due to its revelation of raw, genuine emotion.

However, neither it nor "My brother, you must not die" is worth getting excited about. All residents of this planet desire peace; no one is an unfeeling bundle of flesh and bone. Yet we suppress our own desires and, with good grace, we go off to war. We hold back our tears and head for the place where death awaits us. There is no hypocrisy involved, nor are we tools of national policy. This is a decision of great import, made at a critical juncture in an individual's life; though private, it is precious and solemn. Who would venture onto a battlefield motivated only by the desire to kill? Anyone who sneers at this painful decision but finds "human truth" in the empty words of the aforementioned poets cannot escape censure for espousing a shallow, narrow-minded, self-righteous view of humanity.

Despite some pockets of antiwar sentiment, the great majority of Japanese fully appreciated the gravity of the situation and confirmed their determination to devote their lives to the war effort in this time of crisis. Judging from the huge number of subscriptions for national bonds issued by the government to finance the war, we know that Japanese of all classes were united in support of the war. If the ideology of Kōtoku, Sakai, Yosano and others of their ilk had become mainstream

[2] I will discuss poems written by Yosano Akiko on the occasion of the Mukden Incident and the Greater East Asian War later.

[3] The hundred-prayer pilgrimage (*Ohyakudo mairi*) involves walking between the entrance gate of a temple or shrine and the main building or shrine, offering a prayer, and returning to the entrance gate. This journey is repeated 100 times. Those who embark on it are usually in great need of the object of their prayers.

[4] *Taiyō*, January 1905.

public opinion, imagine what the outcome of the Russo-Japanese War would have been. The Russians would certainly have taken over Manchuria and Korea, and even possibly Japan.

Japanese history books devote a huge amount of space to Kōtoku Shūsui and Yosano Akiko. But would it not make more sense if they passed down the stories of the 100,000 soldiers, famous and unknown, who metamorphosed into supermen in defense of their country, served as human bullets, and died leaving their earthly remains on the plains of Manchuria, in the Yellow Sea, and beneath the waves of the Sea of Japan? We must be mindful that Japan is here today, and we are here today, because of the heroic deeds and sacrifices of those brave, loyal soldiers.

Government bond issues met with enthusiasm

For the first domestic bond issue in March 1904 in the amount of ¥100 million, there were 1.34 million subscriptions, for a total of ¥450 million, which represents an oversubscription of more than four times. The response to both the second issue, in June of the same year, also for ¥100 million, and the third issue in November for ¥80 million, was a subscription rate at least three times higher than the offer. Obviously, the Japanese rose to the occasion because they were fully aware of the objective of the war. Nor was it only the wealthy who applied for those government bonds. Middle- and even working-class Japanese supported the bond drives, even if they had to economize. When they learned that there was a shortage of gold, women practically competed to do their public duty, donating as many rings, hair ornaments, and other jewelry as they could.[5]

Japanese government first applied for foreign loans by offering bond issues in the UK and US, each amounting to £5 million. The bonds proved to be very popular, and clearly showed that both Britons and Americans hoped for and were confident of a Japanese victory.

It was Takahashi Korekiyo, deputy governor of the Bank of Japan, who took charge of obtaining the foreign loans. He intended to limit the first subscription to £5 million, but Jacob Schiff of the US banking firm Kuhn, Loeb & Co. in New York generously offered to underwrite £5 million in the US, arranging for the bonds to be issued by the National City Bank of New York. Schiff was Jewish. He hoped that the Japanese would win the war, and when they did, the resulting upheaval would bring a halt to the persecution of Russian Jews.

Textbooks ignore Commander Tōgō's heroism

Japanese history textbooks devote copious space to antiwar messages. But inexplicably, those same textbooks completely ignore the heroes who contributed so greatly to Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War. They are apparently unworthy of even one line of text. The implication would seem to be that the textbook authors regret Japan's victory, or find it contemptible.

Here is example that supports my assertion: In May 1988 the *Asahi Shinbun* and other left-leaning media launched a campaign opposing the inclusion of Commander Tōgō in an elementary school

[5] Watanabe Ikujirō, *Nisshin Nichi-Ro sensō shiwa* (Chronicles of the 1st Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars) (Tokyo: Chikura Shobō, 1937).

social-studies textbook, where he would be described as a luminary in Japanese history about whom students should be taught. Minister of Education Nakajima Gentarō, without the slightest hesitation, had Admiral Tōgō's name expunged from the textbook in question. (Perhaps he had a great fear of newspapers, for whatever peculiar reason.) But in February of the following year, when the next Minister of Education, Nishioka Takeo, issued his Curriculum Guidelines for Elementary School, he authorized an account about Commander Tōgō for inclusion in social studies textbooks for the upper grades of elementary school.

It is easy to imagine further debate about this issue, but at its crux is our perception of the Russo-Japanese War. I have already explained that in the annals of Japanese history, the Russo-Japanese War occupies a position comparable to that of the Mongol invasions during the Kamakura era (1185-1331). Both were national crises of the highest order. I have also explained that the Battle of Tsushima was a confrontation of great import that decided the outcome of the war. It is important to remember that not until they lost that battle did the Russians finally agree to enter into peace talks mediated by US President Roosevelt.

Let us suppose that the Combined Fleet under the command of Tōgō Heihachirō had been defeated by Russia's Baltic Fleet. The supply line from Japan to China would have been severed, and in the face of a huge Russian army that was continuously acquiring reinforcements, Japanese units in Manchuria would surely have been isolated and annihilated. The Baltic Fleet would have attacked Japan proper, and the Russians might well have ventured a landing there. Needless to say, Port Arthur would once again have fallen into the hands of the Russians.

If Japan had been defeated, what would the situation in Asia have been in the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War? All of Manchuria and all of Korea would have been swallowed up by the Russians, and Japan's own independence would certainly have been in great danger.

The withdrawal of Russian troops from Korea and Manchuria after Russia's defeat in the Russo-Japanese War marked the first time Russia relinquished Asian territory that it had occupied. Not until the Russian withdrawal from Afghanistan in February 1989 was there another such occurrence. Given this information, we should have no trouble understanding the huge significance of both the Russo-Japanese War and the Battle of Tsushima.[6]

Accolades for Japanese victory in British media

Subsequent to the Battle of Tsushima, every British newspaper congratulated the Japanese on their victory and sang their praises. The *Daily Mail* carried an editorial that described the victory

[6] *Asahi Shinbun's* inexplicable stance: It was a front-page article in the May 16, 1988 edition of the Asahi Shinbun that was so disapproving of mention of Admiral Tōgō in elementary school social studies textbooks. The very same edition carried an article announcing the withdrawal of Russian troops from Afghanistan. If the withdrawal news was so momentous, the historical significance of Admiral Tōgō's heroic deeds in the Russo-Japanese War, which ousted the Russians from East Asia was even more important. His appearance in textbooks made perfect sense, and it should have been celebrated. Yet while the newspaper welcomed the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, it spurned a hero who made a huge contribution to the victory in the Russo-Japanese War. If the *Asahi Shinbun's* stance was not rooted in frightful ignorance of Russia's history of aggression in East Asia, then it must be attributed to extreme political bias and anti-Japanese sentiment. Whatever the case, it was an outrageous, shameful article.

as "surpassing Trafalgar." In connection with the Battle of Tsushima, the *Standard* wrote that the high quality of the Japanese soldiers, who proved that humans can be superior to machines, contributed greatly to the victory, adding that that victory will bring the gift of several years of peace to us, although the oppressive Russians must be carefully watched. The *Daily Telegraph* also weighed in, calling the Battle of Tsushima remarkable, and congratulating Japan, Britain's ally, for launching a brilliant strategy in the Orient that culminated in victory.[7] It is interesting to compare these contemporaneous reports in the British press with the deplorable opinions expressed in the aforementioned *Asahi Shinbun* article written more than 80 years later, well after the historical significance of the Battle of Tsushima had been amply demonstrated.

By all accounts every British child is aware of Horatio Nelson's exploits in the Battle of Trafalgar. Yet in today's Japan virtually no young people have heard of Admiral Tōgō, and it is entirely possible that their teachers too are ignorant of the significance of the Russo-Japanese War.

The two greatest crises to confront Japan — the Mongol invasions of the Kamakura era and the Russo-Japanese War of the Meiji era — should occupy prominent places in history textbooks, and should be engraved in the minds of all students. In actuality the great significance of the Mongol invasions, which occurred more than 600 years ago, was not felt until after the Russo-Japanese War began. At the height of the later war, In May of 1904, Emperor Meiji honored Regent Hōjō Tokimune, who is buried at Enkaku Temple in Kamakura, with the Junior First Rank of Court in recognition of his heroic deeds during the Mongol invasions.

Once we are aware exactly how consequential the Russo-Japanese War was to the Japanese people, we realize that the inclusion of Admiral Tōgō in Japan's textbooks was long overdue.

Japan awakens to the value of external public relations

When the Japanese made the decision to open hostilities against the Russians, they also decided to dispatch Baron Kaneko Kentarō to the US. A legal scholar, Kaneko had studied at Harvard University while President Theodore Roosevelt was a student there. The government sent a second envoy, Suematsu Kenchō, son-in-law of Itō Hirobumi, and a graduate of Cambridge University who was conversant with British affairs, to the UK. The government was essentially launching a public-relations campaign, instructing the envoys to convince the citizens of both nations that despite strenuous Japanese efforts toward peace, Russian actions had forced Japan to enter into a defensive war. The two men were also entrusted with promoting favorable public opinion about Japan in the UK and the US, a mission that also involved attempting to dispel and banish the Yellow Peril concept fomented by Russia, which cast Asians as a threat to the West. An important assignment for Kaneko was to foster positive feelings about Japan in the mind of US President Roosevelt in the interest of asking him to mediate future peace talks.

The dispatching of the two envoys during the war in order to pave the way for peace talks that would be advantageous to Japan clearly demonstrates prudence and foresight on the part of Japanese government officials then.

[7] *Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbun*, 02 June 1905.

Itō Hirobumi asked Kaneko to travel to the US on the evening of February 4, 1904, the day of the Imperial Council meeting at which the decision was made to open hostilities against Russia. At first Kaneko refused to go, citing the impossibility of affecting American public opinion, which was always difficult to sway. Itō's response follows.

> No one believes that we are going to win this war. But at this point we have only one choice — to risk our country's future and fight. Speaking for myself, if our Army is routed from Manchuria, our Navy's fleet is sunk in the Tsushima Strait, and Russian troops draw near Japan's shores, I shall shoulder my rifle and, together with my comrades-in-arms, shall journey to the San'in region or the Kyushu coast, and fight, until my last breath, to keep the enemy from setting foot on Japanese soil. Enough of this talk about success or failure. Your mission is to devote every ounce of your energy to gaining the empathy of the Americans.

Persuaded by Itō's impassioned speech, Kaneko agreed to travel to the US, vowing to make as many speeches as it took to win over the Americans.[8]

Once he arrived in the US, Kaneko met with eminent representatives of various spheres of activity, including President Theodore Roosevelt; he gave speeches whenever an opportunity arose. When he spoke he would emphasize the fact that Japan's war against Russia was a defensive war, a just war. He would explain that Japan was far from a nation of barbarians (as Russian propaganda would have it), having brought about the Meiji Renovation, an era of civilization and enlightenment. He would add that in the conduct of the current war, Japan was, unlike Russia, adhering to humanitarian principles and to the letter of international law. Kaneko also touched upon Japanese history and national spirit. The impact of his efforts cannot be overestimated. His powerful speeches, delivered in flawless English, made a huge impression on Americans, with their strong sense of justice. I shall comment further on Kaneko's activities later on.

In the meantime, in the UK Suematsu was putting forth his best effort by delivering speech after speech in an attempt to convince the British public that Japan felt obligated to conduct the current war in the spirit of modern civilization.[9]

It is worthy of mention that though the Japanese are not skilled at self-promotion, they were quick to attend to public relations in Europe and the US when the Russo-Japanese War broke out, and their attempts met with success. It is regrettable that in later years Japanese diplomatic strategists tended to place little value on public relations and propaganda, though that deficiency may be attributable to national character.

---

[8] Kaneko Kentarō, *Nichiro sen'eki hiroku* (Confidential records from the Russo-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Hakubunkan, 1929).

[9] Matsumura Masayoshi, *Nichiro sensō to Kaneko Kentarō: kōhō gaikō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Shin'yūdō, 1980); Matsumura Masayoshi, *Baron Kaneko and the Russo-Japanese War: A Study in the Public Diplomacy of Japan*, trans. Ian Ruxton (Morrisville, North Carolina: Lulu Press, 2009).

Chapter 3: The Russo-Japanese War

6. RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR VIEWED IN THE CONTEXT OF WORLD HISTORY

Japan's victory electrifies Asia

Other consequential effects of the Japanese victory in the Russo-Japanese War were the confidence and hope it provided to the peoples of Asia, and to oppressed people in other parts of the world, and the encouragement it gave to independence movements. Nevertheless, Japanese history textbooks fail to devote even one line of text to the impact of that conflict on world history.

Asia was plagued for years, for centuries even, since the Western world discovered it, by Western encroachment, and became the victim of exploitation and subjugation by the white race. Between the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the nations of the Asia-Pacific region suffered the fate of either being colonized by Western powers or losing portions of their territory to Western usurpation. The one exception to this rule was Japan. Only Japan was a fully independent nation that boasted a constitutional government, a parliamentary system, and a modern army. There was simply no other country in Asia with a constitution and a parliament.

The Russo-Japanese War was a conflict in which people of color defeated the white race, and a constitutional state defeated a despotic one. The impact of Japan's brilliant victory on the undeveloped countries of Asia then groaning under the fetters of Western oppression was monumental. The Russo-Japanese War awakened and aroused all of Asia, and because of it, independence movements arose or expanded.

"Asia cheered the Japanese victory," wrote Dennis and Peggy Warner in *The Tide at Sunrise: A History of the Russo-Japanese War*.[1] The thirst for independence spread to all of Southeast Asia: the Philippines, Vietnam, Burma, and Indonesia.

Another nation it inspired was India. In his autobiography, Jawaharlal Nehru recalled that "Japanese victories stirred up my enthusiasm and I waited eagerly for the papers for fresh news daily. (…) Nationalistic ideas filled my mind. I mused of Indian freedom and Asiatic freedom from the thraldom of Europe."[2]

An Englishman traveling in India made the following observation: "Excitement spread throughout all of India. Even in remote villages Indians sat in circles, or at night gathered around a hookah to talk about the Japanese victory."

---

[1] Dennis Warner and Peggy Warner, *The Tide at Sunrise: A History of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905* (Portland, Oregon: Frank Cass, 2002).

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography; With Musings on Recent Events in India* (London: The Bodley Head, 1955), 16; https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.98834/page/n33/mode/2up (retrieved 4/2023).

But the most shocked of all were the Chinese. Since the 1st Sino-Japanese War, the number of Chinese exchange students in Japan had steadily increased, but after the Russo-Japanese War it ballooned. In 1906, the year after the war ended, there were 15,000 Chinese exchange students in Tokyo.

After China's defeat in the 1st Sino-Japanese War, Chinese intellectuals were at a loss to understand how Japan had become so powerful. But after the Russo-Japanese War, Chinese students were able to come into direct contact with Japanese society; they began to understand the path of Japanese history by learning how Japan had overcome foreign pressure by initiating the Meiji Renovation, and had made a giant leap to modern-nation status by establishing a constitutional monarchy and adopting a slogan: Revere the Emperor, expel the barbarians! It is not surprising that their new knowledge about Japan imbued the students with hope of rescuing their native land, China, from the abyss of ruin. Beginning in 1905, the desire for revolution began to gain momentum among Chinese exchange students.

Encouraged by like-minded Chinese in Tokyo, Sun Yat-sen returned to Japan from London in July 1905, a time when Asia was enveloped in gratitude and excitement because of the decisive Japanese victory. There were three Chinese revolutionary movements active in Japan at the time, including Sun Yat-sen's Revive China Society. But when Sun arrived in Japan, they all joined forces, and in August 1905 the Tongmenhui (Chinese Revolutionary Alliance) was born. The Russo-Japanese War had greatly inspired the Chinese revolutionary movement.

Japanese victory encourages independence movements in other Asian nations

Like the rising sun, the symbol of Japan, the Japanese victory encouraged and inspired ethnic groups in Asia and other parts of the world then struggling under the yoke of white imperialism. I have already mentioned the sudden increase in the number of foreign students who were drawn to Japan; one of them was a man who would later cross swords with Japan, but in describing his early feelings about Japan, Chiang Kai-shek wrote the following:

> At that time [1906], I was indignant about the evil tyrants running rampant in my hometown, oppressing the peasants. I had witnessed my country being exploited by imperialists. The fact that a minor power like Japan was inspired to become powerful and succeeded in defeating Russia was an immense stimulus to my spirit. I begged my mother for permission to go to Japan to study military affairs. I vowed to do my duty to my country, and make a strenuous effort to redeem myself outside of China.
>
> (…)
>
> On board the ship that took me to Japan, I saw a Chinese student spit onto the deck. A Chinese seaman who had observed him do so, provided some advice: "The Japanese do not make a habit of spitting in public places. They use a hand towel or a handkerchief, which they fold up and take home, where they wash it or throw it

> away." What he said impressed me deeply, and I remember that incident just as if it had happened yesterday.[3]

The impression Chiang received then of a hygienic Japan stayed with him, and helped form the foundation for the New Life Movement he founded 30 years later. The shipboard incident was clearly a formative experience for him.

Another Chinese who studied in Japan after the Russo-Japanese War was Zhou Zuoren, younger brother of the distinguished writer Lu Xun. Zhou later reminisced about how the Japanese victory inspired him.

> The first time I went to Tokyo was in 1906, the year after Japan won the Russo-Japanese War. I doubt that many young Chinese remember that conflict today; possibly it is rather vague in the minds of even the Japanese. In any case, I was greatly impressed by two Japanese achievements of that era: the Meiji Renovation and the Russo-Japanese War. At that time Chinese intellectuals were painfully aware of the crisis that confronted our country. They were struggling desperately to think of a way to protect China from Western encroachment. When they learned that the Meiji Renovation had been a success and that the Japanese had discovered a path to strengthening their nation through widespread reforms, they were greatly encouraged. When Japan defeated Russia, they were even more heartened, realizing that it might just be possible to find a way to preserve Asian integrity and resist the Western powers.
>
> (…)
>
> Using the vernacular of that time, I would say that everyone was consumed with ardent enthusiasm for the blossoming of Asia. It is very strange to reminisce about those days, and to recall how very much impressed we Chinese were by Japan's Meiji Renovation, and how very much we hoped that Japan would emerge victorious from the Russo-Japanese War. To be perfectly frank, those feelings were more real and passionate than those we experienced last year when the Greater East Asian War broke out.[4]

Moreover, what Mao Zedong, the Chinese communist revolutionary and Japan's archenemy, told Edgar Snow about it tells us that the Japanese victory made a deep impression on the Chinese.

> Many of the students disliked the "False Foreign Devil" (a teacher who had returned to China after studying in Japan) because of his inhuman [false] queue, but I liked hearing him talk about Japan. He taught music and English. One of his songs was Japanese and was called "The Battle on the Yellow Sea." I still remember some charming words from it.

---

[3] Furuya Keiji, *Shō Kai-seki Hiroku 1: Higeki no Chūgoku tairiku* (Confidential records of Chiang Kai-shek: Tragedy of the Chinese continent, vol. 1) (Tokyo: Sankei Shinbunsha, 1975).

[4] Zhou Zuoren, *Kucha suibi* (Jottings from Bitter Tea Studio) (Shijiazhuang: Hebei Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 2002).

> The sparrow sings,
> The nightingale dances,
> And the green fields are lovely in the spring.
> The pomegranate flowers crimson,
> The willows are green-leaved,
> And there is a new picture.
>
> At that time I knew and felt the beauty of Japan, and felt something of her pride and might, in this song of her victory over Russia.[5]

Nor was it only the Chinese who were inspired. Rash Behari Bose, despite having been born into one of the higher Indian castes, was a patriot whom Japan's victory encouraged to become active in the Indian revolutionary movement. In 1906, the year after the Russo-Japanese War ended, Bose joined the Indian National Congress, a radical group that advocated armed revolutionary action. Later he fled to Japan, where he was sheltered at the home of Sōma Aizō in Shinjuku, Tokyo through the good offices of Tōyama Mitsuru and other proponents of pan-Asianism.[6]

Japan's victory provided encouragement and hope to independence activists and boosted the momentum of nationalism. It also provided impetus to similar movements in other nations, such as the Philippines, Vietnam, Burma, and Indonesia.

Its impact was not limited to Asia. Finland, Poland, Sweden, and other European nations that had been suffering under violent Russian oppression fervently hoped for Russia's defeat and rejoiced with the news of each Japanese victory. It is not hyperbole to state that Japan's triumph in the Russo-Japanese War has great historical significance on a worldwide scale.

[5] Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China* (New York: Random House, 1938), 133.

[6] Sōma Aizō, *Ichi shōnin to shite* (From a merchant's perspective) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1938).

Chapter 3: The Russo-Japanese War

7. EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE ANNEXATION OF KOREA

Disingenuous Korean declaration of neutrality

During the dozen or so years after the Russo-Japanese War ended, numerous events occurred that ended up transforming not only the Asian, but also the world political situation. They included the Japanese annexation of Korea, the 1911 (Xinhai) Revolution in China, Japan's Twenty-One Demands of China, the struggle for supremacy over the Manchurian Railway, US exclusionist laws against Japanese immigration, the Russian Revolution, the Siberian Intervention, as well as the repercussions of the 1st World War. Among these events, only the Japanese annexation of Korea brought some stability to the Far East. The others, without exception, became underlying causes of subsequent crises and conflicts.

The Russo-Japanese War provided encouragement to independence movements all over the world. The only exception was Korea, which Japan eventually annexed. At first the annexation seemed like an inconsistency, but it was closely connected to the fact that Korea was the primary cause of the Russo-Japanese War. I will now discuss the chain of events that led to the annexation, which left deep, lingering emotional scars on both the Japanese and Korean people.

In January 1904, when relations between Japan and Russia became tense, the Korean court, out of the blue, secretly dispatched telegrams to the Western powers declaring "strict neutrality." Russia, however, ignored the telegram, having already taken control of Seoul. The declaration, which would have prevented the withdrawal of Russian troops, was nothing more than a scrap of paper.

In fact, that peculiar document, peculiar in the sense that no hostilities had yet taken place, was a strategic move on the part of the Russians. Should war break out with Russia, the Japanese would certainly choose Korea as a route for their troops. Therefore, prodded by the Russians to bar the Japanese military from using Korean territory, the Korean government issued a premature declaration of neutrality. The disingenuous nature of the declaration soon became clear. Several days after it was issued, the Japanese seized a small craft on the Yellow Sea carrying a Korean, the bearer of a letter requesting troops from Port Arthur. Astonishingly, the senders of the letter were the very officials who issued the declaration.

That letter served as proof that, in this instance, Korean neutrality was a sham.[1]

The aforementioned Canadian journalist F.A. Mackenzie was in Korea at that time. He interviewed then Korean Prime Minister Yi Yong-jik[2] not long before hostilities between Japan and Russia erupted.

---

[1] Homer B. Hulbert, *The Passing of Korea* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1906), 189-190; https://archive.org/details/passingofkorea00hulbuoft/mode/2up (retrieved 05/2023).

[2] Also spelled Yi Yung-ik.

> One personal recollection of these last days before the war remains stamped on my memory. I was in Seoul and had been invited to an interview with Yi Yung-ik. (…) I urged on him the necessity of reform, if Korea was to save herself from extinction. Yi quickly retorted that Korea was safe, for her independence was guaranteed by America and Europe.
>
> "Don't you understand," I urged, "that treaties not backed by power are useless [?]. If you wish the treaties to be respected, you must live up to them. You must reform or perish."
>
> "It does not matter what the other nations are doing," declared the Minister. "We have this day sent out a statement that we are neutral and asking for our neutrality to be respected."
>
> "Why should they protect you, if you do not protect yourself?" I asked.
>
> "We have the promise of America. She will be our friend whatever happens," the Minister insisted.
>
> From that position he would not budge.[3]

This was just one instance of Koreans pinning their hopes on others (Europe and the US), while at the same time being unwilling to lift a finger to secure their own independence.

Significance of the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1904

In February, in the early days of the Russo-Japanese War, Japan began winning battles. The Koreans then made an abrupt shift from a pro-Russian to a pro-Japanese stance, and the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1904 was concluded. According to that pact, (1) Korea would accept advice from Japan about improving the administration of the Korean government, and (2) if Korea were endangered, Japan would expropriate such territory as was necessary for military purposes. With this treaty, the traditional Japan-Korea relationship changed, clearly marking the first step toward Korea's becoming a protectorate.

The outbreak of hostilities between Japan and Russia marked the beginning of the historical process by which Korea was annexed by Japan, which advanced with the progress of the war. Korea's precarious political situation precipitated the Russo-Japanese War, and the war precipitated annexation: an unfortunate historical fate whereby Korea was swallowed up.

The 1904 treaty, which permitted the use of Korean territory for military purposes should an emergency arise, did infringe, in some ways, upon Korean sovereignty.

---

[3] Frederick A. McKenzie, *Korea's Fight for Freedom* (New York" Fleming H. Revell Company, 1920), 77-78; https://archive.org/details/KoreasFightForFreedom/page/n73/mode/2up?q=yi+yong-jik&view=theater (retrieved 05/2023).

But if we sit back and think for a moment, we will realize that in the absence of the 1904 treaty, Japan could not have advanced troops from the Korean peninsula to Manchuria. The execution of the war against Russia would have been impossible. Russia, not Japan, would have emerged victorious from the conflict. The reason why, during the diplomatic negotiations between Japan and Russia held prior to the war, the Russians had opposed the use of Korean territory by Japan for military purposes, and the reason why the Russians had instigated the Koreans to declare neutrality, was exactly that. Yes, it is true that the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1904 opened the way for Korea's becoming a Japanese protectorate. But at the same time, it rescued Korea from perpetual Russian control. If we take a close look at history, we will see that the true tragedy of Korea was that its shift to a pro-Japanese stance did not occur until hostilities broke out.

First step toward administrative reform: getting rid of bad money

Six months after the conclusion of the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1904, the Japan-Korea Agreement of August 1904 was signed. It required the Korean government to hire one Japanese national to serve as financial advisor, and one foreign national recommended by the Japanese government to serve as diplomatic advisor. These actions formed the first stage of the administrative reforms mentioned in the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1904.

Megata Tanetarō, who had long served as the director-general of the Tax Bureau, part of the Japanese Ministry of Finance, was installed as financial advisor. He took advantage of the skills he had acquired at the ministry and undertook a herculean task: putting Korea's muddled finances in order. The first task he addressed was currency reform.

> The famous gibe of a British Consul in an official report, that the Korean coins might be divided into good, good counterfeits, bad counterfeits, and counterfeits so bad that they can only be passed off in the dark, was by no means an effort of imagination.[4]

Megata resolutely and effortfully set about improving Korean finances. To put a stop to excessive production of paper currency, he closed the mints in Yongshan and Incheon. He entrusted the work of the Korean government's national treasury to the Keijō (Seoul) branch of the Dai'ichi Bank, a Japanese institution. Megata also arranged for the unlimited circulation of notes issued by that same bank.

> Under the old methods, Korean money was among the worst in the world. (…) Mr. Megata changed all this, and put the currency on a sound basis, naturally not without some temporary trouble, but certainly with permanent benefit to the country.[5]

[4] F.A. McKenzie, *The Tragedy of Korea* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1889), 111; https://archive.org/details/tragedyofkorea00mcke/page/n7/mode/2up (retrieved 05/2023).

[5] *Ibid.*

Korea's protectorate status brings stability to East Asia

How did impartial third parties feel about the protectorate, now that Korea's finances and diplomatic affairs were under Japanese supervision? Tyler Dennett, a prominent American historian, believed that it would bring stability to East Asia.

> The Koreans, in their recent history, and in most of the diplomatic representatives in Washington during the period since the President had been a resident of the city, could not have commended themselves to his respect or admiration. … [I]t appears to have been evident to the President that Korea, long a derelict state, a menace to navigation, must now be towed into port and secured.[6]

At no time did Roosevelt interfere in the process by which Korea became a Japanese protectorate. He did, however, express his opinion in a postscript to a brief note sent to Secretary of State John Hay: "We cannot possibly interfere for the Koreans against Japan. They could not strike one blow in their own defence."[7]

British Foreign Secretary Henry Lansdowne, also voiced a similar opinion:

> It has, however, become evident that Corea, owing to its close proximity to the Japanese Empire and its inability to stand alone, must fall under the control and tutelage of Japan.[8]

From these citations we can see that there was a common understanding worldwide of the Korean problem.

Iljinhoe: source of strength to Japan

The Korean government had little faith in Japan's ability to win the Russo-Japanese War. It adopted a noncommittal stance, and despite the existence of the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1904, did not lift a finger to aid the Japanese military in executing their operations. However, among ordinary Korean citizens were many who understood, at least to some extent, why it was important for Japan to win, and who were kindly disposed toward the Japanese military. Their acts certainly deserve to be recorded in the annals of history.

In the early days of the war, the aforementioned F.A. Mackenzie traveled in the northern part of Korea. He wrote that "everywhere I heard from the people during the first few weeks nothing but expressions of friendship to the Japanese." He explained that it was the conduct of Japanese soldiers that motivated such goodwill. Troops were disciplined, and they treated even the enemy

[6] Tyler Dennett, Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War (Gloucester, Mass.: P. Smith, 1959), 110-11.

[7] *Ibid.*, 110.

[8] *Ibid.*, 111.

with benevolence. When they requisitioned provisions, they paid fair prices for them, so the Korean people could not help but feel well-disposed toward them.[9]

MacKenzie added that "the coolies and farmers were friendly because they hoped that Japan would modify the oppression of the native magistrates. A large section of better-class people, especially those who had received some foreign training, were sympathetic, because they credited Japan's promises and had been convinced by old experience that no far-reaching reforms could come to their land without foreign aid."[10]

The best known pro-Japanese Korean group, Iljinhoe, was formed in the fall of 1904, when the Russo-Japanese War was at its height. Heading the Iljinhoe, with its purported million members, was Yi Yonggu, a former officer of the now-defunct Donghak Party. The five principal aims of Iljinhoe were (1) respect and honor the Korean court, (2) protect the people's lives and property, (3) improve government, (4) ameliorate management of financial and military affairs, and (5) give full support to the Japanese military.

Yi Yonggu viewed the war as a crucial conflict against Russia, which represented the encroaching Western powers. He believed that a military alliance with Japan would change Korea's fortunes by halting Russian aggression and helping Asia recover. At a time when the prevailing mood in Korea was decidedly anti-Japanese, Iljinhoe's efforts to assist Japan, both in word and deed, were fraught with the greatest of difficulties. Nevertheless, Iljinhoe kept moving ahead, never wavering from its commitment.

At that time the railroad in Korea extended only from Busan to Seoul. Service between Seoul and Sinuiju, needed to transport Japanese troops to Manchuria, did not exist because no track had been laid.

Since the Korean government was unhelpful, Japanese troops were experiencing great difficulties. But Iljinhoe stepped in and took action. To transport weapons and ammunition to the north, the organization formed a Northward-Bound Corps, an enterprise that was accompanied by enormous challenges, difficulties, and sacrifices.

Approximately 150,000 Iljinhoe members from Hwanghae, South Pyongan, and North Pyongan provinces participated in the construction of the Gyeongui Line (extending from Seoul to Sinujiu). Another 115,000 members were mobilized to transport munitions from northern Korea to Manchuria using *jige*, wooden devices carried on their backs. The transport corps and the construction corps, taken together, accounted for 260,000-270,000 of the Iljinhoe's million members. A look at contemporaneous records referring to wage receipts amounting to ¥26,410 and out-of-pocket expenses paid by members amounting to ¥122,704 tells us that the majority of the cost of building the railroad was borne by the members themselves.

[9] McKenzie, *The Tragedy of Korea*, 110.

[10] *Ibid.*

The Iljinhoe members were motivated by both anguish and hope to take selfless action. Their desire to rebuild their country and all of East Asia gave them the courage to make an enormous investment in the Russo-Japanese War, braving a host of hardships: the dangers posed by war, accidents, illness, and high costs, all of which were compounded by harassment from anti-Japanese Korean government officials.[11]

Despite the fact that a harmonious relationship and deep understanding developed between Japanese and Koreans, Mackenzie observed that the selfish, volent acts of "petty tradesmen," merchants who followed Japanese troops to Korea, alienated the Korean people. To make matters worse, as the Japanese accumulated more victories, soldiers "began to acquire a more domineering air."[12]

In addition to the exhilaration that comes with victory, there must have been other reasons that would explain Japanese soldiers' objectionable behavior. Still, as their compatriot, I am filled with sorrow at the thought that immoral and depraved acts committed by some Japanese alienated Koreans who, for a time, trusted the Japanese and went to great lengths to help them.

Protectorate treaty leads to annexation

In August 1905, while the Russo-Japanese War was still in progress, the Second Anglo-Japanese Alliance was signed. The terms of the treaty included British recognition of Korea as a Japanese protectorate. When the war ended with a Japanese victory, there were no longer any impediments to Korea's new status. At the conclusion of the Portsmouth Peace Conference in 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt told Komura Jutarō, Japan's foreign minister, that making Korea a protectorate was the only way to eradicate future problems, and that it was the optimal strategy, as far as for stability in Korea and peace in the Far East were concerned. Foreign Secretary Lansdowne was even more definitive, stating that not only did Great Britain have no objection to actions taken by Japan vis à vis Korea, but also sincerely hope they would bear fruit. In November the Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty was concluded, and Japan thus acquired control over Korean diplomatic affairs.

Reports have it that during negotiations relating to the Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty, (now) Emperor Gojong begged Itō Hirobumi any number of times to preserve the dignity and at least the outward appearance of Korea as a nation. It is difficult not to sympathize with Gojong. In his place I myself might have been cowed by Itō's overbearing demeanor during those negotiations. However, when we are reminded that Korea's ever-changing diplomatic strategy, which tended to veer from one extreme to the other, was a major factor behind Far Eastern instability, and that it was the primary cause of the Russo-Japanese War, the decision to make Korea a protectorate was, within the context of history, the next logical step to take.

In Korea one event gave rise to the next. Gojong secretly dispatched envoys to the Hague Convention of 1907 to lobby for rendering the protectorate null and void, but their efforts ended

[11] Ōhigashi, Kunio, *Ri Yōkyū no shōgai* (Life of Yi Yonggu) (Tokyo: Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1962).

[12] Mackenzie, *The Tragedy of Korea*, 51.

in failure. As a result, Gojong was forced to abdicate, and Sunjong was installed as the new emperor in July of that year. At just about the same time the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1907 was signed, and Japan took control of Korean domestic affairs and began supervising administrative improvements. With renovation as the new national policy Japan began implementing modernization policies of every description, including politics, administration of justice, industry, education, and sanitation. With the exception of one battalion, the palace guard, the Korean armed forces were disbanded.

Without a doubt, the abrupt reform of Korea's antiquated, backward society claimed its victims. In 1908 Korean immigrants assassinated Durham Stevens, an adviser to the Korean Foreign Office, while he was on furlough in the US. Then, in October of the following year, Itō Hirobumi was assassinated by independence activist An Jung-geun. These events may have hastened the process, but in any case, in August 1910, Korea was annexed by Japan, and the Joseon dynasty, which had lingered for more than 500 years, came to an end.

Hopelessly backward Korean society

Korean society was extremely primitive. Not only were its institutions and civilization backward, but also its thought patterns. In the minds of the Korean people, modernization represented evil. This rigid mindset pervaded all classes of Korean society, and presented a perverse barrier to Korean modernization. Even the introduction of electric trains into Korea became an impetus for riots.

Korea, Fact and Fancy, compiled by Horace Allen, an American missionary, contains a chronology of the chief events in Korea. Allen records several incidents involving electric trains. In August 1901 two Korean men sleeping on a railroad track and using the rails as pillows were decapitated by a train. In October 1903 a train ran over and killed a Korean child; a riot ensued, and the Japanese police turned out to calm the mob. In January 1904 a Korean coolie was hit and killed by a train and, again, a riot broke out, necessitating the mobilization of the U.S. guards.[13]

To learn why such incidents were so frequent, I turned again to MacKenzie's *The Tragedy of Korea.*

> When the electric tramway was first opened in Seoul, the drivers and conductors were greatly hindered because coolies constantly slept in the roadways, and used the rails as pillows. The conductors became quite expert in throwing these men off the track. It is said— although I cannot guarantee the truth of this story— that a number of high officials presented a petition to the Emperor protesting against the action of the tramway company. The petitioners pointed out that sleep is natural for man, and that to disturb sleep suddenly is injurious. They therefore begged the Emperor to issue a command to the tramway drivers that when they came upon a man sleeping across the track, they should stop their cars and wait until he awoke.

[13] Horace N. Allen, *Korea, Fact and Fancy* (Seoul: Methodist Publishing House, 1904), 219, 234; https://archive.org/details/koreafactfancybe00alle/mode/2up (retrieved 05/2023.

> One or two people sleeping in this manner on the line were run over and killed. Thereupon a mob rose, destroyed a tramcar and nearly killed the driver. The leaders were arrested and brought before a city judge. When asked what excuse they had, the leader spoke out vigorously. "Our fathers have told us," he said, "that we must on no account disturb the stone tortoise which sleeps outside our city gates." (…) "They told us that once the tortoise awakes, great troubles will happen to our country. Now the hissing of these electric cars will awaken the tortoise, and we are not going to have it. The cars must stop!"[14]

The preceding excerpt shows how hopelessly backward and ignorant Korean society was at the time. No one can deny that the prevailing mentality, which equated modern reforms with Japanese aggression and viewed modernization as criminal, had a profoundly negative influence on the advancement of Korean society.

Righteous armies and their battles

Armed organizations that arose in Korea for the stated purpose of saving their country were called Righteous armies. Anti-Japanese Righteous armies emerged in 1895 subsequent to the assassination of Queen Min. But the Righteous-armies movement gained momentum in 1907 after the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1907 was concluded and the Korean military was disbanded. The unemployed soldiers joined the Righteous armies, which then acquired weapons and organization; fierce anti-Japanese strife ensued throughout Korea.

When confronted with the argument that the Korean people lacked the desire and the preparation to become independent, the Koreans argue, "just look at the tremendous feats of the Righteous armies. If you look at the frightful energy of those armies, you cannot say that Koreans are shiftless and wretched."

I will concede to the fierceness of the Righteous-army movement. Reports have it that the armies participated in 2,850 conflicts, and that more than 14,000 of their number were killed during those conflicts. Perhaps I should attribute the horror of their acts to "the energy of resentment" characteristic of the Korean people.

Enmity and hatred — in the case of Korea, the target would be Japan — can sometimes indeed give rise to fierce energy. But with energy that stems from the anger of a people, and only energy, a nation cannot achieve modernization or independence. Populist energy can never become the driving force behind an independence movement unless the people are united behind powerful leaders pursuing goals that will benefit them.

The energy of the Righteous armies was the product of hatred and enmity aimed at Japan and the Japanese. It was indeed a tremendous force, but unfortunately it did not come at the proper time. A comparison with Japan's renovation movement at the end of the shogunate should provide an important perspective when considering the modern history of Korea.

[14] McKenzie, *The Tragedy of Korea*, 101-102.

Spirit of the Korean Declaration of Independence

It is possible that I will become the target of criticism for what is perceived to be an unsympathetic view of Korea. Although I do not heap praise upon Korean history and its people, neither do I disparage them. I am the first one to praise excellence when I recognize it. For instance, when I read the Korean Declaration of Independence, written some years later (on March 1, 1919), I was deeply touched by its nobility of spirit and the breadth of its scope. I believe that it is one of the most skillfully crafted documents of the century. At the same time, it distresses me greatly that though the Korean people possessed such noble ideals and generosity of spirit, they failed to use those qualities to set their sights on and achieve independence.

A terrible tragedy

I have provided a cursory account of the events that transpired between the Russo-Japanese War and the Japanese annexation of Korea. For the Korean people, those years represent a terribly tragic episode in their history, and I do not blame them for viewing them as Japanese "aggression." When I attempt to put myself in the Korean emperor's place as he begged the condescending representatives of the Japanese government to allow Korea to retain some semblance of sovereignty, I cannot help but empathize with him and his love for his country. Moreover, I mourn the fact that my country had no choice but to adopt an unyielding, forceful policy against a neighboring nation.

However, at the same time, I feel compelled to speak out for Japan, for my own country. Despite the fact that Japan, well before any other nation, recognized Korea as an independent nation, Korea was unable to achieve independence. Consequently, Japan was forced to risk its own destiny by waging two wars. Because the Japanese were loath to wage a third war, they revoked Korean independence, which in any case existed in name only, and annexed that nation.

I am convinced that in a world where survival of the fittest is, however cruel that might be, the governing principle, there was no other course for Japan to take if it valued its survival. The annexation of Korea was a terrible tragedy. But the fact that the annexation stabilized the political situation in East Asia remains there, in plain sight.

CHAPTER 4: THE INCEPTION OF DISCORD BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE US

1. BATTLE FOR RAILROAD SUPREMACY IN MANCHURIA

Theodore Roosevelt's pro-Japanese sentiments

Japan-US relations, which had been amicable for the half-century beginning in the Ansei era (1854-1860), deteriorated in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War. Before I delve into the circumstances surrounding that transformation, however, I would like to describe a time when relations between the two countries were truly friendly, during the Russo-Japanese War, through the lens of the words and deeds of President Theodore Roosevelt.

As already stated, as soon as the Japanese government made the decision to go to war with Russia, it dispatched Baron Kaneko Kentarō, who had studied at Harvard University at the same time as Roosevelt, to the US. Kaneko did his level best to accomplish his mission, which was to foster pro-Japanese public opinion. His efforts bore fruit: the US took Japan's side in the war.

Here are a few notable anecdotes about Kaneko's public-relations campaign.

On March 27, not long after he arrived in the US, Kaneko paid a visit to President Roosevelt; this was the first time the two men met. Roosevelt told him that Japan was going to win the war, adding that "we must ensure that Japan emerges victorious." He added that "Japan is fighting for justice and humanity, while the Russians are committing atrocities wherever they go. Russia's behavior toward Japan is particularly inhumane and unjust. I would like to work on Japan's behalf, both behind the scenes and openly. This must be a private agreement between the two of us. I do not want to read about it in the newspapers."[1]

Kaneko's second meeting with Roosevelt took place on March 28. On that occasion Roosevelt said, "No one has greater respect for Japan than I." He explained that it was the writings of American orientalist Ernest Fenollosa that piqued his interest in Japan, adding that he would appreciate recommendations of books that might inform him about the driving force behind the Japanese temperament and moral education.[2]

[1] Kaneko Kentarō, *Nichi-Ro sen'eki hiroku* (Confidential records from the Russo-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Hakubunkan, 1929).

[2] *Ibid.*

Kaneko's response was to promise to send copies of *Bushido: The Soul of Japan,*[3] written by Nitobe Inazō, and *Heroic Japan,*[4] by American linguist F. Warrington Eastlake,[5] which contains detailed descriptions of the organization and campaigns of the Japanese military during the 1st Sino-Japanese War. When Kaneko received an invitation to the White House for June 6, President Roosevelt told him that *Bushido* had provided valuable insight into the attributes of the Japanese people. Roosevelt added that he had ordered 30 copies of the book to give to friends and acquaintances, and one copy for each of his five children. "I told them that they should be sure to read this book every day so as to cultivate that noble, elegant disposition and sincere strength of spirit that distinguish the Japanese character. However, since we are a republic and therefore have no equivalent of the emperor, whom the Japanese revere so greatly, I told them that we should look to the flag of the United States of America as our alternative."[6] Kaneko had certainly plumbed the depths of Roosevelt's emotions.[7]

On April 2, 1905 Kaneko delivered a speech entitled "The Japanese Character and Ideals" at New York's Carnegie Hall. In it he referred to the Imperial Rescript on Education and the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors, which he had translated into English, as having been instrumental in forming the Japanese spirit.[8] The audience response was very enthusiastic, and Kaneko received many requests for translations. For instance, instructors from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis asked for translations of the Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors to use as teaching material. Brig. Gen. Frederick D. Grant, the eldest son of General and former President Ulysses S. Grant, asked for a copy as well, saying that he wished to have the soldiers under his command read it and aspire to become soldiers who are as strong as members of the Japanese army.

When Japan's Combined Fleet destroyed Russia's Baltic Fleet in the Tsushima Strait, Americans were beside themselves with delight. Kaneko sent a telegram to Emperor Meiji, which read, "Americans are overcome with joy at the great victory in the Japan Sea, the likes of which the world has never seen." Especially pleased with the victory was Roosevelt. He sent a personal message to Kaneko on May 31, in which he wrote, "Neither Trafalgar nor the defeat of the Spanish

[3] Nitobe Inazō, *Bushido: The Soul of Japan* (Rutland, Vermont: Tuttle Publishing, 1969).

[4] F. Warrington Eastlake and Yamada Yoshiaki, *Heroic Japan: A History of the War Between China & Japan* (Washington, D.C.: University Publications of America, 1979).

[5] Eastlake's co-author was Yamada Yoshiaki, president of the Japan Chautauquan Association.

[6] Matsumura, *op. cit.*

[7] Kaneko, *op. cit.*

[8] The 03 April 1905 edition of the *New York Times* gives "The Effects of the Russo-Japanese War on the Relations of Eastern and Western Nations" as the title of Kaneko's speech.

Armada was as complete – as overwhelming."[9] At the end of the letter the president handwrote "Banzai!"[10]

In July, as the war was nearing its end, Kaneko was invited to Roosevelt's residence in Oyster Bay, New York. On that occasion Roosevelt told Kaneko, "Looking at the situation in the Orient, I realize that Japan is the only nation that possesses the strength that independence requires. Japan should take the lead in adopting an Asiatic Monroe Doctrine. It is urgent that Japan help the nations of Asia to achieve independence. To prevent the nations of the West from seizing territory or otherwise encroaching on Asia, Japan must be sure to proclaim to the world that she is inaugurating an Asian version of the Monroe Doctrine. Its scope should extend from the Suez Canal in the west to Kamchatka in the east." Then Roosevelt cautioned Kaneko: "Do not make this public while I am president. However, when I cease to be president, and am simply Theodore Roosevelt, I will be sure to make my opinion known."[11]

These anecdotes are evidence of Roosevelt's trust in Japan. According to diplomat and legal scholar Shinobu Junpei, it was from reading *Chūshingura*[12] that Roosevelt learned how much the Japanese prize loyalty; the tale inspired him to champion Japan.[13]

Japan is to be feared: Roosevelt's apprehension

Soon after the Russo-Japanese War broke out, President Roosevelt warned Germany and France that if they collaborated with Russia against Japan, as they had done in 1895 with the Triple Intervention, the US would, without delay, side with and support Japan. "Japan," he wrote smugly and somewhat shortsightedly, "is playing our game."[14]

Perhaps historian Thomas A. Bailey was correct in his appraisal of Roosevelt's comment. With the Japanese winning victory after victory, the seeds of apprehension may have been growing in his mind.

In June 1905, when the war was nearly over, Roosevelt wrote the following in a personal message to Sen. Henry Cabot Lodge:

---

[9] Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Baron Kaneko dated May 31, 1905; https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record/ImageViewer?libID=o191797 (retrieved 06/2023).

[10] President Roosevelt did handwrite "Banzai!" at the end of at least two of his letters to Kaneko, but not this one. See letters dated 03/11/1905 and 05/29/1905 at https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Search?r=1&searchTerms=kaneko (retrieved 06/2023).

[11] Kaneko, *op. cit.*

[12] Tamenaga Shunsui, *Chūshingura* (Loyal ronins, an historical romance), trans. Saitō Shūichirō and Edward Greey (New York: Putnam, 1880); https://archive.org/details/loyalroninshisto00chiuiala (retrieved 06/2023).

[13] Shinobu Junpei, *Meiji hiwa: nidai gaikō no shinsō* (Meiji revelations: the truth about two major diplomatic events) (Tokyo: Banrikaku Shobō, 1928).

[14] Bailey, *op. cit.*, 517.

> Most certainly the Japanese soldiers and sailors have shown themselves to be terrible foes. There can be none more dangerous in all the world.[15]

How do we interpret a comment like this, in light of the fact that we know Roosevelt was favorably disposed toward the Japanese? The aforementioned Tyler Dennett believed that Roosevelt admired, but at the same time, feared Japan. For that reason, he made efforts to rescue loathsome Russia from total annihilation.

Moreover, beginning with the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War, American attitudes toward Japan began to change — subtly, perhaps, but unmistakably. Yes, with that war, the Japan-US relationship, which had been extremely friendly for half a century, starting with the opening of Japan to the world, transmuted into one of confrontation and conflict. That conflict would worsen with the advent of two problems: the struggle for railroad supremacy in Manchuria and exclusionary American immigration policy.

The Greater East Asian War: nomenclature and definition

The term "Greater East Asian War" was determined by the institution that enjoyed the highest effective decision-making authority in Japan on December 10, 1941, two days after the outbreak of the conflict, i.e., the Imperial Headquarters-Cabinet Liaison Conference. The announcement issued was, "The current war against the United States and Great Britain, as well as the 2nd Sino-Japanese War, and any future conflicts that arise in conjunction therewith shall be called the "Greater East Asian War." On December 12, this nomenclature was formally approved at a Cabinet meeting. That is why, at the time, the entire nation of Japan referred to the war they were fighting as the Greater East Asian War. Given the geographical area in which the war was fought, and its historical background, including the fact that it was a confrontation between East and West, this name made very good sense and was easily accepted. Nomenclature that gained currency in the postwar period, e.g., the Pacific War and the 15-Year War, has no historical basis and are therefore not appropriate choices.

What sort of conflict was the Greater East Asian War? I shall attempt to answer this question.

The Greater East Asian War arose when two major historical currents merged and then collided. The first, and main, current was the contest for supremacy in Asia. US Far Eastern policy was based on the Open Door Policy, which was established in the late 19th century. American policy clashed with Japanese special interests in Asia, especially Manchuria and Mongolia. It merged and then clashed with the second current, the struggle to protect Japan and East Asia from communism, which surfaced after the Russian Revolution. The conflict between Japanese and American Asian policies and the battle against communism were the two main aspects of the Greater East Asian War.

[15] Dennett, *op. cit.*, 163-64.

Prelude to tension between Japan and the US: breakdown of the Harriman project

In a nutshell, at the essence of the conflict between Japan and the US, which formed the main current of the Greater East Asian War, was Japan's continental Asia policy, which asserted a special relationship with China and Manchuria, and American Far Eastern policy, which was based on the Open Door Policy. When did the conflict between the two nations, whose finale was the Greater East Asian War, begin?

I believe that the starting point was the period immediately following the Russo-Japanese War. In other words, the prototype for the Greater East Asian War should be perceived as the conflict between Japan and the US over policy in continental Asia. In *Affirmation of the Greater East Asian War*, Hayashi Fusao maintains that the Greater East Asian War was the finale of a 100-year-long war that began during the Kōka era (1844-48).[16] I do not dispute his claim, but if we are to define the essence of the Greater East Asian War as I have done, then we must conclude that there was no such conflict prior to the Russo-Japanese War. The struggle for supremacy over the Manchurian Railway, as I am about to describe it, was the prelude to the conflict between Japan and the US that culminated in the Greater East Asian War.

US interference in the railways of Manchuria began near the end of the Russo-Japanese War, when American railroad czar E.H. Harriman launched a project whose objective was the purchase of the South Manchuria Railway. Harriman dreamed of building a railway network that would extend around the world connecting the US, the Pacific Ocean, Japan, Manchuria, Siberia, Europe, and the Atlantic Ocean. His plan was to begin by purchasing the South Manchuria Railway, and then the Chinese Eastern Railway. He acted quickly, leaving for Japan in August 1905, while the Portsmouth Peace Conference was still in progress. Harriman approached powerful government officials and private citizens in Japan, suggesting that Japan and the US jointly run the South Manchuria Railway, ownership of which Japan was likely to acquire; he met with no opposition to his proposal. On October 12 he entered into a preliminary agreement with Prime Minister Katsura Tarō concerning the joint operation of the South Manchuria Railway, and triumphantly returned to the US. However, when Foreign Minister Komura, who returned from Portsmouth right after Harriman's departure, learned about the agreement, he was appalled! Komura strongly appealed for the annulment of the agreement. He argued that it was improper to enter into an agreement concerning transfer of the railway without obtaining approval from the Chinese. Komura added that the sale to the Americans of a railway acquired at the cost of the lives of 100,000 compatriots, ¥2 billion in government funds, and the surrender of Japanese interests in South Manchuria would go against the spirit of the Portsmouth Treaty. Komura's remonstrations prevailed; when Harriman's ship docked at San Francisco, he was told that the agreement had been rendered null and void.

Komura's decisiveness succeeded in blocking the first attempt to use American capital to interfere in the South Manchuria Railway. The Harriman agreement is noteworthy as the first effort on the

[16] Hayashi Fusao, *Dai Tōa Sensō kōteiron* (Affirmation of the Greater East Asian War) (Tokyo: Miki Shobō, 1984).

part of the US, subsequent to the Russo-Japanese War, to implement the Open Door Policy in Manchuria.

Treaty of Manchuria; prohibition against parallel lines

As already stated, pitting one barbarian state against another is a time-honored Chinese policy. When the Russians occupied Manchuria, the Chinese, unable to rid themselves of them through their own devices, finally ousted Russian troops using the strength of the Japanese (the Russo-Japanese War). As a result, Japan acquired Russian interests in Manchuria, which prompted the Chinese to invite the UK and US to expel the Japanese. This endeavor caused great dissension, but in order to understand it we must first familiarize ourselves with the Treaty of Manchuria.

I have already stated that the Treaty of Portsmouth prescribed the transfer of the Russian lease on the Liaodong peninsula, as well as the South Manchuria Branch of the Chinese Eastern Railway (later known as the South Manchuria Railway), to Japan. However, Chinese consent to the transfer of interests was required because China was signatory to a treaty with Russia; the Treaty of Portsmouth clearly states that consent is required. In December of 1905, subsequent to the conclusion of that treaty, Japan and China signed a pact in Beijing stating that China had consented to the transfer of those interests. This was the Treaty of Manchuria.

In later years China, riding on an upsurge of nationalism, repudiated all Japanese interests in Manchuria, and using what is referred to as "revolutionary diplomacy," attempted to unilaterally regain possession of Port Arthur, Dalian, and the South Manchuria Railway. That maneuver generated friction between Japan and China, and was one of the causes of the Manchurian Incident. But what is important to remember is that the aforementioned leases were transferred to Japan in accordance with a treaty between Russia and China. Later on, I will be discussing the Hull Note, which was received at around the time war broke out between Japan and the US. That document contained language denying that Japan lawfully acquired leases on the Liaodong peninsula and the South Manchuria Railway via the Portsmouth Treaty (negotiations for which were mediated by the US!) and the Treaty of Manchuria. The Americans were all but demanding that the situation in Manchuria revert to its status prior to the Russo-Japanese War. When the Hull Note was foisted upon the Japanese, they reached the conclusion that war was inevitable.

The most important aspect of the Treaty of Manchuria was an additional protocol attached to it by which China agreed not to construct a branch line or trunk line parallel to a South Manchuria Railway; its purpose was to protect the profits of the South Manchuria Railway. The Chinese would end up violating this protocol again and again, creating an important point of dispute between Japan and China that can be linked to the Manchurian Incident.

China was certainly the guilty party in this dispute. It is perhaps pointless to deplore such violations at this late date. However, if the Chinese had adhered faithfully to the Treaty of Manchuria alone, it might have been possible for the two nations to maintain a peaceful relationship. Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War restored freedom to Manchuria, which had been occupied by Russia and rendered inaccessible to the Chinese. Manchuria, which the Chinese could not recover on their own, was returned to China by dint of Japanese might. Nevertheless, the Chinese soon attempted to expel the Japanese by begging the UK and the US to intercede on their behalf. As a result, Manchuria was transformed into a hotbed of chaotic dispute and rivalry.

Dollar diplomacy intrudes on Manchuria

The problems caused by a proposal to construct a railroad between Xinmintun and Fakumen represented a new, blatant manifestation of the Chinese practice of putting barbarian states into opposition against each other. They arose in the spring of 1907, when the Chinese entered into negotiations "surrounded with secrecy" with the British firm Pauling and Company regarding the construction of a railway joining Xinmintun (situated to the west of Mukden) with Fakumen, (situated 50 miles north of Xinmintun). However, since the proposed line would run parallel to the trunk line of the South Manchuria Railway, its construction would constitute a brazen breach of the protocol attached to the Treaty of Manchuria.[17] When the Japanese learned of the negotiations, they issued protests to China on several occasions, but the Chinese ignored them and proceeded with their *sub rosa* negotiations, even going so far as to draw up a contract with Pauling. The project grew, with the proposed line extending to Qiqihar in the north, thus becoming a large trunk line running parallel to the South Manchuria Railway.[18]

Fortunately, the British government was sympathetic to Japan's position, and in 1909 an agreement was signed between Japan and China obligating China to notify Japan in advance of constructing a railway line between Xinmintun and Fakumen, whereupon the Chinese scheme collapsed. On the one hand, the Chinese entered into a pact with the Japanese promising not to build a railway that ran parallel to the South Manchuria Railway; on the other, they nonchalantly violated that pact. It is no wonder that the people of Japan came to view China with distrust and scorn.

During the international rivalry over railway lines in Manchuria, which suddenly became contentious with the Xinmintun-Fakumen problem, the most noteworthy incident occurred two months after that problem was settled, in November 1909. It was none other than a proposal by US Secretary of State Philander Knox. He submitted what is now referred to as his "neutralization proposals," which would have affected railways in all of Manchuria. The first was for an international syndicate to lend China the funds to purchase all railways in Manchuria; the syndicate would administer the railways until China repaid the loan. The second proposal was to be implemented if the first proved unfeasible. Several Western powers would jointly build the Jinzhou-Aigun Railway, thus "neutralizing" all of Manchuria. Never mind that the proposed railway would have traversed Manchuria, extending from Jinzhou in the south to Aigun in the north, thus posing a serious threat to the South Manchuria Railway.

A single corporation can be blamed for the ill-fated Harriman project. However, when Knox interfered in Manchuria, he was secretary of state, and thus spoke for the entire US. The foreign policy espoused by William Howard Taft, who succeeded Theodore Roosevelt, was referred to as "dollar diplomacy." The proposal to neutralize Manchuria was an attempt on the part of Secretary Knox to implement the Open Door Policy in Manchuria using the power of the US dollar, and was symbolic of dollar diplomacy.

---

[17] Pauling and Company were not aware of the protocol.

[18] Alfred W. Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), 179-80; https://archive.org/details/fareasternpolicy0000gris (retrieved 06/2023).

Still, a policy that attempted to impose self-serving ideas totally divorced from the reality of Manchuria was bound to flounder. It was perfectly reasonable for Japan and Russia, which had the most urgent interests in Manchuria, to join together in opposition to it. Neither the UK nor France, both of which supported the stances taken by Japan and Russia, would side with the US; therefore, the Knox proposals, designed to "smoke Japan out" of Manchuria, was consigned to oblivion.[19] However, this incident gave rise to the friction and strife between Japan's continental policy, rooted in the history and reality of Manchuria, and American Far Eastern policy, based on the ideological Open Door Policy. In a broad sense, the Greater East Asian War, the series of disputes between Japan and the US involving East Asia, began at this time.

On the other hand, US interference in Manchuria, ironically, stimulated rapprochement between Japan and Russia. After the Russo-Japanese War ended, both nations chose conciliation over another conflict. In 1907 the 1st Japan-Russia Secret Agreement was concluded; in it both nations established their spheres of influence in Manchuria. In 1910, the year after the Knox proposal surfaced, the 2nd Japan-Russia Secret Agreement further elucidated those spheres of influence. As historian Alfred W. Griswold wrote, rather aptly, "Instead of dividing Russia and Japan, and opening the door to American participation in the financial exploitation of Manchuria, [Knox] had, as it were, nailed that door closed with himself on the outside."[20]

In 1913 Theodore Roosevelt wrote the following about the Taft administration's interference in Manchuria: "Unfortunately, after I left office … a most mistaken and ill-advised policy was pursued towards Japan, combining irritation and inefficiency … ."[21]

Roosevelt was right. Thanks to Taft's dollar diplomacy, the Japan-US relationship, which had been so intimate and amicable until the end of the Russo-Japanese War, became one of enmity and conflict, all because of Manchuria.

[19] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 157.

[20] *Ibid.,* 175.

[21] Theodore Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1985), 395.

CHAPTER 4: THE INCEPTION OF DISCORD BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE US

2. US ANTI-JAPANESE EXCLUSIONARY POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Chinese Exclusion Act

Now I must address problems relating to the exclusion of Japanese immigrants, which arose in the US at about the time the Russo-Japanese War was being fought. Along with the struggle for supremacy in Manchuria, those problems formed one main current of conflict between Japan and the US.

The first East Asian immigrants to the US were Chinese, who began arriving in California during the Gold Rush, in 1848. There was a grave shortage of manpower needed for railway construction in the American west, as well as in the emergent mining industry in California. At first the Chinese laborers were made to feel welcome. However, their numbers soon swelled, and when they did, discord with American laborers resulted, arose, giving birth to a movement to exclude Chinese. The exclusion crusade gained strength until finally, in the 1880s, the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed (and later made more stringent. After 1906 Chinese laborers were permanently barred from entering the US and its possessions, and Chinese nationals were denied the right to become American citizens.

Japanese emigration to Hawaii

Japanese emigration to the US began as far back as 1861, but at first the number of immigrants was very small. However, in the 1880s, when the Chinese Exclusion Act went into force, the number of Japanese laborers entering the US, replacing the Chinese, began to burgeon.

In Hawaii, after the middle of the 19th century, most of the workers in the sugar-cane industry were Chinese immigrants, but once the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed, it affected Hawaii, even though Hawaii was not US territory. As stated earlier, King Kalakaua visited Japan in 1881, at which time he expressed his hope for more Japanese immigrants to Hawaii. In 1884 the Agreement Between Japan and Hawaii Concerning Emigration from Japan[1] was concluded, and in 1885 the first group of 944 public contracted workers arrived in Hawaii. Subsequently the number of Japanese immigrants ballooned. By 1900 there were 61,111 Japanese residing in Hawaii (39.7% of the total population).[2]

The Japanese were the largest foreign group in Hawaii; they outnumbered Chinese and native Hawaiians by two to one, and Americans by nine to one. According to Griswold, "Had the issue

[1] Konishi Naojirō, ed., *Hawaikoku fūdo ryakki* (Brief description of the society of the Kingdom of Hawaii) (in Japanese) (Tokyo: Eishodo, 1884).

[2] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 339.

[of which nation Hawaii should belong to] been decided by numbers of settlers alone, the islands might well have gone to Japan."[3]

Nevertheless, Hawaii was annexed by the US in 1898.

Anti-Japanese trend gains momentum

Until about 1900 Japanese immigration to the continental US did not cause a serious problem. But with the dawning of the 20th century, the number of Japanese immigrants suddenly soared. The reason for this increase was the new territorial status of Hawaii, and the subsequent large numbers of Japanese moving to the West Coast of the US, California in particular. As if corresponding with their increase in numbers, the anti-Japanese movement began to gain momentum.

The Japanese government took remedial action by limiting the number of Japanese emigrants bound for the US, but the anti-Japanese trend in the US remained unabated. Soon politicians from western states resorted to using the "Japanese problem" as a political platform. The Russo-Japanese War served to fuel the flames of the anti-Japanese movement in large part because the war had given rise to a national perception of conflict between Japan and the US. When the war was near an end in May 1905, the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League materialized in San Francisco. The organization used propaganda and provocation to lobby the US Congress, aiming to achieve its objective of expanding the Chinese Exclusion Act to include Japanese.

On April 18, 1906 San Francisco was visited by a huge earthquake, which was followed by catastrophic fires. Since Japan had been plagued by earthquakes throughout its history, the Japanese government was quick to send a gift of ¥500,000 for disaster relief. That gift would be equivalent to over ¥1 billion today, and it amounted to more than the total of similar gifts from other nations. Nevertheless, little appreciation was shown for Japan's generous gesture. Professor Ōmori Fusakichi, a seismological expert from Tokyo University and his team, who came to the US to do research on the earthquake, were greeted by stone-hurling vandals. Japanese restaurants were boycotted, and all the city's newspapers were filled with hateful, anti-Japanese rhetoric day after day, which further poisoned the already anti-Japanese atmosphere.

Proposed segregation of Japanese schoolchildren

In October 1906 the San Francisco Board of Education ordered the segregation of Japanese schoolchildren, a decision that had been brewing since the preceding year. As a result, Japanese students who had been enrolled in public schools were to be forced to attend a segregated school (the Oriental Public School) located on Clay Street in San Francisco's Chinatown.

There had been unceasing vituperative attacks on Japanese immigrants, likely designed to justify the enactment of a Japanese Exclusion Act. But according to Griswold, "The school board seems to have acted more in response to a desire to humble the Japanese than on the merits of the case it

[3] *Ibid.*, 339-40.

presented. The segregation order was one with the anti-Japanese riots, boycotts and Congressional resolutions that marked the progress of the exclusionist movement."[4]

The Japanese government responded with a protest that condemned the segregation order, pronouncing it a contemptuous act that categorized the Japanese as an inferior race, and caused grievous insult to their national pride and honor.

For some time President Theodore Roosevelt had been worried about the effect the exclusionist movement might have on Japan-US relations, and he was extremely critical of the segregation order. In October 1906, he wrote the following in a letter to his son Kermit:

> I am being horribly bothered about the Japanese business. The infernal fools in California, and especially in San Francisco, insult the Japanese recklessly and in the event of war it will be the Nation as a whole which will pay the consequences.[5]

In a message to Congress delivered at the end of 1906, Roosevelt spoke of the progress Japan had made, saying that it "now stands as one of the greatest of civilized nations." He also referred to the generous gift of $100,000 Japan had sent to the people of San Francisco after the earthquake. He drew their attention to the friendship that had developed between the two nations, and the economic and cultural cooperation. Roosevelt referred to the segregation order as a "wicked absurdity." He recommended that legislation be passed enabling Japanese immigrants to become American citizens. And he warned that if persecution of the Japanese continued, he would not hesitate to employ the military forces of the US to stop it. Roosevelt's hard-line stance on this matter was welcomed by the Japanese, but only antagonized the residents of California.[6]

The Gentlemen's Agreement and its aftermath

Roosevelt ultimately succeeded in convincing the San Francisco Board of Education to rescind the school segregation order. But in its stead appeared a prohibition against Japanese with passports for Canada, Mexico, or Hawaii entering the continental US, and also a treaty limiting the number of Japanese immigrants.

Subsequently the US warned Japan that if the aforementioned prohibitions had no effect and that the Japanese government did not make a sufficient effort to limit the emigration of laborers, a Japanese Exclusion Act was likely in the offing. Between November 1907 and March 1908, 11 memoranda were exchanged between Foreign Minister Hayashi Tadasu and US Ambassador to

---

[4] *Ibid.*, 350.

[5] Theodore Roosevelt to Kermit Roosevelt, letter, 27 October 1906 https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record/ImageViewer?libID=o280819&imageNo=1.

[6] Transcript of President Theodore Roosevelt's Sixth Annual Message to the Senate and House of Representatives, 03 December 1906; https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/december-3-1906-sixth-annual-message.

Japan Thomas J. O'Brien concerning limitations on the emigration of laborers, before an agreement was reached.[7]

That agreement was what is referred to as the Gentlemen's Agreement. In it the Japanese government voluntarily agreed to prohibit new immigration to the US. Only laborers who were returning from visits to Japan; the parents, wives, and children of laborers already residing in the US; students, merchants, and the like could now enter the US. No new laborers were permitted.

Later the Japanese government made every effort to suppress any recurrence of anti-Japanese campaigns in the US by steadfastly adhering to the terms of the Gentlemen's Agreement.

Historian Payson J. Treat's perspective on the Gentlemen's Agreement follows:

> [U]nder the agreement, the Japanese Government scrutinized carefully every applicant for a passport. Its officials knew perfectly whether a man was a merchant or a laborer. There have been few if any cases of passports having been wrongly granted.
>
> (…)
>
> Man for man, the Japanese immigrants compared very favorably with the European immigrants of this period. They were generally literate, almost always law-abiding, industrious, and ambitious to rise in the world.[8]

Unfortunately, the Gentlemen's Agreement did not succeed in calming anti-Japanese crusades, though it remained in force until 1924. The aforementioned Mr. Griswold describes those offensives as follows:

> [The Gentlemen's Agreement] was constantly shaken by exclusionist activities on the Pacific Coast, and by the pursuit, on the continent of Asia, of a policy precisely the opposite of that which Roosevelt had counseled. Anti-Japanese bills and resolutions kept piling up not only in the California legislature but also in those of Nevada, Oregon and Washington.[9]

[7] Gaimushō (Foreign Ministry of Japan), *Nihon gaikō bunsho* (Documents on Japanese foreign policy), 40-3, 1907: "Beikoku ni oite honpō imin tokō seigen oyobi haiseki no ken" (Travel restrictions on and exclusion of Japanese emigrants to the United States)."

[8] Treat, *op. cit.*, 256-57.

[9] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 360.

CHAPTER 5: JAPAN AND WORLD WAR I

1. A RE-EXAMINATION OF THE TWENTY-ONE DEMANDS

Japan finally enters the war

On June 28, 1914, during a visit to Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir presumptive to the throne of Austria-Hungary, and his wife were assassinated by a Serbian youth. That incident caused the already tense situation in the Balkan peninsula to worsen, and on July 28 Austria declared war on Serbia. On August 1 Germany declared war on Russia. France and Britain soon declared war on Germany. Europe was now enveloped in the dark clouds of conflict: World War I had broken out.

On August 4 Britain declared war on Germany. On the same day William Conyngham Greene, British ambassador to Japan, called on Foreign Minister Katō Takaaki, to explain how Britain would handle the European war in the context of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, adding that "if the fighting should extend to the Far East, and an assault on Hong Kong and Weihaiwei were to occur, His Majesty's government would rely on the support of the Imperial government." Also on August 4, the Japanese government announced that it would observe strict neutrality, but if the object of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance should become endangered, Japan would take the necessary measures to fulfill its obligations thereto, at the same time expressing the fervent hope that Japanese participation would not be necessary.[1]

Still on the same day, in Britain, Foreign Secretary Edward Grey summoned Japanese Ambassador Inoue Katsunosuke, and told him that His Majesty's government "was deeply grateful to the Japanese Government for their generous offer of assistance." Grey added that since France had aided the Russian fleet during the Russo-Japanese War, Japan was entitled to ask the UK for assistance, given the terms of the alliance, but Japan did not do so. This was indeed a "generous attitude" that demonstrated sincerity and self-restraint, and it encouraged the UK to avoid causing trouble for Japan. However, in the event that Japan's aid became necessary, "His Majesty's Government would gladly avail themselves of Japanese assistance."[2]

Subsequently a formal request emanated from the UK, asking the Japanese government "to employ some of their warships in hunting out and destroying German armed merchantmen

[1] Kajima Morinosuke, *The Diplomacy of Japan*, vol. 3, *1894-1922* (Tokyo: Kajima Institute of International Peace, 1980), 38-39.

[2] *Ibid.*, 39, 41.

in China"[3] to protect British commercial vessels. There were minor inconsistencies in the British and Japanese perceptions of exactly what Japan's sphere of action would be, but on August 15, Japan sent an ultimatum of the following nature to Germany:

(1) Withdraw German men-of-war and armed vessels of all kinds immediately from the Japanese and Chinese waters, and disarm at once those which cannot be so withdrawn.
(2) On a date not later than September 15th, 1914, deliver the entire leased territory of Kiao-chou [Jiaozhou] to the Imperial Japanese Authorities, without condition of compensation, with a view to eventual restoration of same to China.[4]

Japan had no desire to become involved in the war. However, on August 23, when one week had passed (an unprecedently generous deadline for a reply to an ultimatum) and no reply had been forthcoming, Japan declared war on Germany.

Japanese troops wasted no time launching an offensive on Qingdao, and by early November had taken possession of all railways in Shandong province: Jiaozhou Bay, Qingdao, and Jiaoji (Jiaozhou to Jinan). Meanwhile, in mid-October, the Japanese Navy seized German possessions north of the equator in the Pacific Ocean.

Japan refuses to send troops to Europe

Beginning in the autumn of 1914, after Japan joined the war against Germany, requests emanating from Britain, France, and Russia for the deployment of Japanese troops to Europe were received. Japan turned down these requests. When a second request emanated from Britain, Foreign Minister Katō sent a resolute refusal, stating that the Imperial army's "sole object is national defence. The dispatch of the Imperial army far away from home for purpose other than those partaking of the nature of national defence is therefore incompatible with the fundamental principle of its system…."[5]

Additionally, Japan received appeals from Belgium, France, and Serbia to send army units to Europe, but rejected each and every one of them.

---

[3] *Ibid.*, 41.

[4] *Ibid.*, 54.

[5] *Ibid.*, 211; Itō Masanori, ed., *Katō Takaaki, gekan* (Katō Takaaki, vol. 2) (Tokyo: Kato Hakudenki hensan iinkai (Compilation Committee for the Biography of Count Kato), 1929).

When the aforementioned requests were made, Britain came forth with an offer to assist with the cost of dispatching troops, and with the opinion that by dispatching those troops Japan should certainly have an important, active role in postwar Allied conferences. Nevertheless, Japan responded in the negative.

Within the same time frame, on September 2, Britain asked Japan to dispatch a fleet to the Mediterranean Sea, but the Japanese government replied that the Navy's purpose was to defend Japan from foreign invaders, and that Japan did not have the reserves for an overseas campaign.[6] On November 15 Britain asked Japan, once again, to send a fleet to the Dardanelles to join with the British fleet in blockading the German and Turkish fleets. On that occasion Britain offered to assist with repairs necessitated by damage to Japanese ships, and to furnish fuel and munitions at no cost to Japan. But the Japanese, citing the same reasons as before, said no, explaining that dispatching a Japanese fleet to Europe would weaken Japan's defenses, and that the presence of the main fleet in Japanese waters was indispensable to keeping the peace in the Far East. However, the activity of German warships intensified, and in January 1917 Britain again requested the deployment of Japanese warships to the Mediterranean Sea. After lengthy negotiations, Japan acquiesced, and dispatched a torpedo squadron comprising a cruiser and eight destroyers in early February.

Incidentally, in February 1917, Germany announced that it would engage in unrestricted submarine warfare, and true to its word, did exactly that, causing severe damage to Allied vessels. Many Japanese passenger ships sailing to and from Europe were attacked and sunk in the Atlantic, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Indian Ocean. Although the Japanese had refused to dispatch a fleet to the Mediterranean, they were forced to change their stance when confronted with that situation. However, the Ōkuma Cabinet (1914-16) had already refused to dispatch a fleet. For the Terauchi Cabinet (1916-18) to overturn that decision, it needed assurance of British support for Japanese claims on Shandong and German possessions north of the equator in the Pacific. When the Japanese government queried Britain, it received a reply, on February 16, stating that His Majesty's government would willingly support those claims.

I hope that my brief description of the reasons behind Japan's entrance into the First World War will help readers understand that Japanese participation in that conflict was not motivated by malicious or self-serving intentions, as the following account in a Japanese high school textbook would have us believe:

---

[6] *Ibid.*, 214.

> The [Japanese government] declared war against Germany, believing that an ideal opportunity had arrived that would permit Japan to expand its influence in Asia, on the strength of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.[7]

The truth is that our government opted to enter the war only after carefully considering multiple factors: appeals from the Allies, friendship and treaties with other nations, the underlying principles of Japan's armed forces, the unfolding of the war situation, and national interests. There was certainly no unscrupulous underlying motive.

The Twenty-One Demands in context

During World War I, Sino-Japanese relations were complicated by what are referred to as the Twenty-One Demands, which are considered by some to be a synonym for aggression against China. An account in the aforementioned textbook describes them as follows:

> In 1915 Japan forced the Twenty-One Demands on the Yuan Shikai government. These constituted a significant infringement of Chinese sovereignty and were greeted by vehement opposition from China. The US attempted to rein Japan in, but Japan removed only a portion of the demands, issued an ultimatum, and forced the Chinese to accept them.[8]

Accounts on this topic in other Japanese history textbooks, without exception, are similar in content and message. But is it really possible to condemn Japan because of the Twenty-One Demands? The aforementioned American historian Griswold offers his opinion on this matter, which thoroughly explains Japan's reasons for presenting the Twenty-One Demands and their historical background.

> Japan had been making great strides toward wealth and power since her war with Russia. But she had by no means reached the objectives the attainment of which she believed her geographical situation made imperative. The position in Korea, southern Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia that she had wrested from Russia and fortified with the sundry political instruments already discussed had enhanced her sense of security, yet left it far from complete. Russia herself, though bound to Japan by various treaties, was still a menace to the north. England and

---

[7] Naoki Kōjirō *et al.*, *Nihonshi santeiban* (Japanese history, third edition) (Tokyo: Jikkyō Shuppan, 1989).

[8] *Ibid.*

> the United States caused her further uneasiness. The Knox neutralization scheme and the Chinchow [Jinzhou]-Aigun project had threatened the foundations of her special position north of the Great Wall. South of it, in China proper, she had experienced the same difficulty in forcing her way into the thicket of Europeans rights and privileges as had the United States.
>
> (…)
>
> In China proper lay the raw materials and natural resources which, for Europe, were profitable speculations, but for Japan were the lifeblood of existence … [Japan] had not attained her goal; she was fearful of losing what she had, and this because of the competitive imperialism of Western nations, thousands of miles away, to which China was of infinitely less political and economic significance than to Japan. Now that these Western nations were preoccupied with the war, Japan would adjust the situation. Since 1895, when France, Russia and Germany had forced her to return the Liaotung [Liaodong] Peninsula to China, Western interventionists had repeatedly thwarted Japan in her pursuit of what, to her, was not only a just but vitally essential policy. This time she would profit by experience. She would strengthen her foothold in Manchuria and Mongolia, and make that in Shantung [Shandong] secure enough to withstand another Triple Intervention. She would establish access to China's raw materials, to the financial, industrial and commercial privileges which she considered indispensable to her existence as a modern industrialized state, and for which she had been too poor, financially, to compete with Europe. Because she had not been able to accomplish these ends by economic means, she would do so by political. Finally, she would make the contract so binding that it could not be broken on European council tables once the war freed Europe's attention. Such, briefly, was the origin of the Twenty-One Demands.[9]

Were the Twenty-One Demands unreasonable?

In January 1915 Hioki Eki, Japanese ambassador to the nascent Republic of China, under orders from Foreign Minister Katō, presented the Twenty-One Demands to President Yuan Shikai. A summary follows.

[9] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 187-89.

Group I: Four articles whereby the Japanese government demands that the Chinese government agree in advance to Japan's disposition of former German interests in Shandong province.

Group II: Seven articles demanding: a 99-year extension of the leases on Port Arthur and Dalian, as well as on the South Manchurian and Anfeng (Andong-Mukden) railways; permission for Japanese nationals to reside, travel, and conduct business in South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia; the consent of the Japanese government when a railway is to be built or the Chinese government employs advisers, to be obtained in advance.

Group III: Two articles demanding that the Hanyeping Co. be made a joint Japanese-Chinese concern when the opportune moment arrives.

Group IV: One article demanding that the Chinese government neither cede nor lease any harbor, bay, or island along the coast of China to a third power.

Group V: Seven articles (these were *desiderata*, not demands) that were alleged to infringe upon Chinese sovereignty: (Article 1) a request that the Chinese government employ Japanese political and military advisers; (Article 2) a request that Japanese hospitals, temples, and schools be given the right to own land; (Article 3) a request that joint Japanese-Chinese police forces be established in certain areas, if necessary; (Article 4) a request that China purchase a fixed amount of weapons from Japan or establish a Japanese-Chinese jointly operated arsenal; (Article 5) a request that railway construction rights in South China be granted to Japan; (Article 6) a request that priority be given to Japan concerning the construction or working of railways, mines, and harbors in Fujian province; (Article 7) a request that Japanese subjects be granted the right to do missionary work in China.

Thus, there were 14 demands; again, the five articles in Group V were *desiderata*. The term "Twenty-One Demands" itself was a Chinese construction — an exaggeration designed, for propaganda purposes, to have a negative effect — and it certainly was misinterpreted.

Were the so-called Twenty-One Demands in fact unreasonable? I will now investigate two or three of them in depth.

For instance, let us have a look at Group II, which concerns Manchuria and Mongolia. There is nothing remarkable about extending the term of lease for concessions in Port Arthur and Dalian, or for the South Manchuria Railway, for 99 years. Remember that when Britain leased Hong Kong from China, the term was 99 years. The Chinese objected to allowing Japanese

citizens to reside, engage in business, and own land in Manchuria and Mongolia, saying that as long as Japanese nations enjoyed extraterritoriality there, they may as well have colonized those areas. Perhaps the Chinese had a point there, but China had already granted special rights of the same sort in Outer Mongolia to Russia, so this argument was hardly persuasive.

An examination of Group III, which relates to the Hanyeping Ironworks, tells us that this was not a new demand. It was based on a longstanding relationship between the ironworks and Japan. Zhang Zhidong, the Viceroy of Huguang, established the enterprise in Hanyang in 1892. It had started out with iron mines in Daye, and then the ironworks was established. Later, entrepreneur and politician Sheng Xuanhuai took over the business. In 1896, the year after the 1st Sino-Japanese War ended, he combined three entities: the Hanyang Arsenal, the Daye iron mines, and the Pingxiang colliery to form Hanyeping Ironworks. Also in 1896, the Yahata Steel Works was founded in Japan. Because iron ore is scarce in Japan, the Japanese signed a contract with Hanyeping in 1899 for the importation of iron ore to Japan and the export of the same amount of coal to China. Since Germany plotted to obstruct Japanese interests after the Boxer Rebellion, Japan lent ¥3 million to Hanyeping in 1904, and with the Daye Iron Mine as collateral, extracted a promise not to sell that collateral to any other nation for a period of 60 years. This arrangement permitted Japan to fulfill the huge demand for iron ore during the Russo-Japanese War. When the 1911 (Xinhai) Revolution broke out, revolutionary forces attempted to confiscate Hanyeping. Sheng Xuanhuai attempted to avoid confiscation by paying CN¥ 2 million, asking Japan for help in raising the money. Japan agreed, provided that Hanyeping be made a joint Sino-Japanese venture. A provisional merger contract was drawn up. The relationship between Japan and Hanyeping was strengthened, but China was leaning toward nationalizing the firm. Hanyeping, which was of life-and-death importance to Japan, was now in a precarious position. This situation prompted the submission of Group II, whose articles were not at all sudden new demands.

Group V *desiderata* did not infringe upon Chinese sovereignty

There was considerable background behind and reasons for the *desiderata* in Group V, for which Japan was accused of infringing upon Chinese sovereignty. For instance, the reference to Fukien [Fujian] in Article 6 is related to the demand concerning harbors, bays, and islands along the coast of China in Group IV.

The historical background: In 1898, when the Western powers divided up China, Japan and China signed a diplomatic note stating that China would not cede Fujian province to any other nation. However, in December 1900 the US was contemplating establishing a concession at Sansha Bay, located on the coast of that province. Japan objected, stating that such an enterprise would violate an agreement concluded between Japan and China, and also conflict with the objective of maintaining territorial integrity in China, which the US had advocated. Moreover, this would be an attempt to violate Chinese sovereignty coming in the face of American arguments against doing exactly that. Consequently, the US abandoned that scheme.

However, according to political scientist Takagi Yasaka, that incident was recorded in 1915, but accounts pertaining to it were not published until 1924.[10, 11] Therefore, in 1915, when the Twenty-One Demands were the target of international scrutiny, the world knew nothing of the Sansha Bay concession scheme. Japanese aspirations in and requests pertaining to Fujian province were condemned unilaterally because the world was totally ignorant of the historical background. This is one example that demonstrates that the criticism of the Twenty-One Demands was unfair.

Another example: in mid-March 1915 during negotiations pertaining to the Twenty-One Demands, Sun Yat-Sen, one of the leaders of the Chinese revolution, sent a note to Koike Chōzō, head of the Foreign Ministry's Political Affairs Bureau. In it Sun proposed a Japan-China covenant that would include the following terms: (1) to facilitate joint Japan-China operations, Chinese weapons would be manufactured to match the gauge of Japanese weapons, (2) when the Chinese military or government planned to employ foreigners, Japanese would be given priority, and (3) Japan would be consulted in advance when foreign capital was needed or a merger was planned for mines, railways, or coastal routes.[12] Surprisingly, Sun's alliance proposal was almost identical to portions of the Twenty-One Demands (Group II, Group III, and Articles 4, 5, and 6 of Group V), in connection with which Japan was criticized for infringing upon Chinese sovereignty. Sun Yat-sen's proposal demonstrates that his aspirations were almost exactly the same as Japan's demands and *desiderata*. The fact that the Twenty-One Demands, despite the amount of censure they received from China and elsewhere, actually matched Chinese preferences renders meaningless the vast majority of disparagement Japan was subjected to for presenting the Twenty-One Demands.

***Asahi Shinbun*: "Chinese locutions are offensive"**

Negotiations between Japan and China over the Twenty-One Demands persisted for four months; the long, drawn-out process included 25 meetings, if one counts only official sessions. During that time Japan acceded to Chinese wishes, withdrawing some of the demands. Revision after revision was made, but still no agreement could be reached. Ultimately Group V was deleted with the proviso that negotiations concerning it would be

---

[10] Takagi Yasaka, *Beikoku tōyō seisaku no shiteki kōsatsu* (Historical considerations of US Far Eastern policy) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1942).

[11] US Department of State, Office of the Historian, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, The Lansing Papers, 1914-1920, Volume II;* https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1914-20v02/d236; *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, with the Address of the President to Congress December 7, 1915; https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1915/d87.*

[12] Usui Katsumi, *Nihon to Chūgoku: Taishō jidai* (Japan and China: Taishō era) (Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1972).

held at a later date. The matter was settled by incorporating the remaining 16 articles into an ultimatum that China was pressed to accept. The fact that an ultimatum was issued gives the impression that force was involved, but today we are certain beyond a reasonable doubt that Yuan Shikai himself asked that it be issued.

Furthermore, I should mention that another factor instrumental in the ultimatum's issuance was uncompromisingly inflexible public opinion, and here journalists must accept some responsibility. Newspaper editorials came out with language like "Give them a deadline!" and "China is to blame!" (*Tokyo Asahi Shinbun*, 01 May and 04 May), "An ultimatum is inevitable!" (*Tokyo Nichinichi Shinbun*, 04 May), "An ultimatum must be the next step" (*Jiji Shinpō*, 05 May). The 05 May edition of the *Tokyo Asahi Shinbun* went as far to censure China, calling the language in the Chinese government's final reply "exceedingly offensive," and said that the "Empire's demands must be met, representing as they do, a grand 100-year plan for East Asia." Even progressive politician Yoshino Sakuzō concluded that "at this point we have no choice but to issue an ultimatum." We must be mindful that these opinions were the predominating ones at that time.

How the Twenty-One Demands were distorted

China formally accepted the ultimatum issued by Japan, and the negotiations came to an end. A treaty between Japan and China including 16 articles came into being and was signed and sealed on May 25, 1915 (the Sino-Japanese Treaty of 1915). I would now like to address a few of the repercussions engendered by that treaty.

On May 11, US Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan sent a notification to both Japan and China; it read, in part, as follows:

> [T]he Government of the United States has the honor to notify the Imperial Japanese Government that it cannot recognize any agreement or undertaking which has been entered into or which may be entered into between the Governments of Japan and China, impairing … the political or territorial integrity of the Republic of China, or the international policy relative to China commonly known as the open door policy.[13]

[13] US Department of State, Office of the Historian, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Telegram from Secretary of State Bryan to Ambassador Guthrie in Tokyo, 11 May 1915;* https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1915/d143.

This was the harbinger of US Far Eastern policy informed by the open door policy, which later achieved fame as the "nonrecognition policy." Bryan's nonrecognition reflex was eventually embraced by Secretary of State Henry Stimson, in his nonrecognition of the Manchurian Incident, when it became even more widely known. Later, during negotiations between Japan and the US, after the 2nd Sino-Japanese War began, it morphed into Secretary Cordell Hull's rigid "respect for principles," which severely harmed Japan-US relations and ultimately provoked war between Japan and the US. From this standpoint it is safe to conclude that Bryan's announced nonrecognition of the Twenty-One Demands was a crucial step in the process leading to the Greater East Asian War.

Now I would like to point out how China's extremely exaggerated, distorted version of the Twenty-One Demands, publicized at home and abroad, created needless misunderstanding. Chinese repudiation of the Twenty-One Demands subsequently became the main theme of the anti-Japanese movement. The most influential organization in that movement was the All-Hubei Society for Commercial and Diplomatic Affairs.

A pamphlet issued by that organization, claiming to be an explanation of the Twenty-One Demands, made the following claims about them.

1. China shall cede police and administrative authority in South Manchuria to Japan.
2. All instructors of Chinese army and navy personnel shall be Japanese.
3. The Japanese language shall be taught in all Chinese schools.
4. In the event of insurrections in China, China shall ask Japan for military support, and Japan shall maintain public order in China.
5. China shall cede all oil interests.
6. Japanese nationals shall have the right to engage in business anywhere in China.

All of the above were fictitious "demands" that had no connection to the actual Twenty-One Demands. Publicizing these fabrications further aggravated the problem.

The situation grew even worse when Paul Reinsch, US ambassador to China, became involved. Reinsch was known for wearing two hats: pro-Chinese and anti-Japanese, he was both an official representative of the US Department of State and an unofficial advisor to the Chinese government. Historian Charles Tansill had the following to say about Reinsch:

> In connection with [the Twenty-One Demands] the American Minister at Peking, Paul Reinsch, sent to the Department of State a

> series of dispatches so critical in tone that they helped to create in American minds a fixation of Japanese wickedness that made eventual war a probability. This probability was increased when Secretary Bryan (May 11, 1915) sent to Tokyo a nonrecognition note that was later exhumed from the old files of State Department correspondence by Secretary Stimson and fashioned into a hand grenade that shattered all hope of peaceful relations between Japan and the United States.[14]

1. Eventual fate of the Twenty-One Demands

With the conclusion of the 1915 treaty, the matter of the Twenty-One Demands was considered settled. But what was the eventual fate of the individual demands? The Chinese claimed that the treaty was forced upon them, and that they were not exercising free will when they signed it. They insisted that it be declared null and void. They deliberately failed to adhere to its terms, and in 1923 the Chinese National Assembly passed a resolution abrogating the treaty.

If it were possible to abrogate a treaty on the grounds that it was signed under some pressure, most of the world's treaties would immediately be revoked. For instance, the Treaty of Peking signed after the 1st Sino-Japanese War was, in fact, a consequence of the Triple Intervention. Suppose the Japanese had espoused the same logic employed by the Chinese. They could have insisted that the Treaty of Peking was forced upon them, declared it null and void, and claimed the right to take *permanent* possession of the Liaodong peninsula. Then there would have been absolutely no need to extend the leases in Southern Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia (Group II of the Twenty-One Demands). But would the Chinese consent to such a position? Furthermore, the Germans could have made the same claim about the Treaty of Versailles. As could the Japanese with respect to the Potsdam Declaration, which followed the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan. In the first place, China's logic was patently self-serving. In the second place, the Japanese were not guilty of suppressing Chinese free will. Remember that the treaty the Chinese found so objectionable was the product of a full four months of diplomatic negotiations.

What is surprising is that soon after the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese Treaty, in June of 1915, China issued a decree ordering the punishment of traitors. According to the draconian decree, the definition of a traitor was anyone who leased land to a Japanese; traitors were to be summarily executed, without the benefit of a trial. Of course, the intent here was to prevent Japanese from acquiring land. At about the same time, the Chinese secretly distributed a handbook to civil servants in South Manchuria, instructing them to obstruct land lease

[14] Tansill, Charles Callan, *Back Door to War: The Roosevelt Foreign Policy 1933-1941* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952), 51; https://archive.org/details/backdoortowarroo0000char_c3u3.

transactions that involved Japanese. Therefore, land leases in South Manchuria that should have been finalized the moment the treaty was signed, now disappeared into thin air. That a government could use a decree issued at the very moment an international treaty had been concluded to obstruct its implementation was an act of betrayal without precedent anywhere in the world. As a result, China infringed on every right the Japanese had acquired through the treaty in South Manchuria and East Inner Mongolia. This action strained and exponentially worsened the relationship between Japan and China in Manchuria, and became one of the primary causes of the Manchurian Incident.

As I stated earlier, in the end only 16 of the 21 demands were presented to China. These were incorporated into the June 1915 treaty, but at the Washington Naval Conference in 1922 Japan returned Shandong province to China, and retracted its preferential rights pertaining to railways in Manchuria and Mongolia, and the hiring of advisors. Every single one of the *desiderata* in Group V, which had been tabled for future discussion, was withdrawn. Consequently, in 1922, when the Washington Conference ended, most of the original demands had lapsed, and only 10, which had survived in the treaty, remained. Even they came to naught, caught in the maelstrom of China's vicious anti-Japanese campaign.

CHAPTER 5: JAPAN AND WORLD WAR I

2. LANSING-ISHII AGREEMENT

Dispatch of special envoy to US

The Lansing-Ishii Agreement, concluded during World War I, seems at first glance to signify a victory for Japanese diplomacy. However, if we probe beneath its surface by examining the language used in it, we realize that its value lies mainly in its exposure of the Americans' unmistakable distrust of and antipathy toward Japan at the time.

On September 5, 1914, not long after the European war had begun, Britain, France, and Russia signed the London Declaration Against Concluding Peace Separately. Ishii Kikujirō was then Japanese ambassador to France. He submitted a proposal to the Japanese government recommending that Japan sign the declaration so as to "secure her right to a voice in peace-making after the war."[1] However, Foreign Minister Katō disagreed with Ishii, presuming that both Japan and Britain would necessarily be in complete agreement at the peace talks, given the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. But in October 1915, by which time Ishii was foreign minister, there had been progress in the negotiations and on October 19, Japan signed the declaration.

The three signatory governments agreed not to conclude peace separately during the war, and to refrain from demanding conditions of peace unless each of the others were in favor thereof. However, the Japanese considered the latter provision to carry more weight. I mentioned earlier that when Britain asked Japan to send battleships to the Mediterranean in February 1917, Japan entered into an agreement with Britain whereby the latter promised to endorse Japanese claims to German possessions in Shandong province and north of the equator in the Pacific. Japan also signed similar agreements with Russia, France, and Italy in February and March. At long last Japan had succeeded in receiving promises of advance support at impending peace talks from Britain, Russia, France, and Italy. At the Paris Peace Conference Japan was now one of the five great powers, and what made that possible, according to Ishii, was signing the London Declaration. He believed that it was especially necessary for a developing nation like Japan to establish a foothold by seizing upon every opportunity to acquire the right to have its voice heard.

During World War I Japan's relationship with Russia acquired a greater degree of intimacy. In July 1916 the two nations signed the 4th Japan-Russia Secret Agreement, whereby both signatories recognized each other's special interests in the Far East. They promised to aid each other if a third-party nation attempted to infringe on their vital interests; if one signatory was obligated to go to battle to defend those interests, the other would provide military support. Unfortunately, that agreement terminated seven months later when the Russian Revolution broke out.

In April 1917 the US finally decided to enter the war. Following the example set by Britain and France, Japan, as one of the Allied nations, welcomed this news, and dispatched Ishii Kikujirō to the US as special envoy on a congratulatory mission. As Japan had already concluded agreements

[1] Kajima, *op. cit.*, 84.

with the other Allied nations, the Japanese were intent on arriving at an understanding with the Americans about Far Eastern policy during the special envoy's visit. At least that would have been the expected course of events. From Japan's perspective the Americans doggedly promoted the Open Door Policy and seemed inclined to check Japanese advances into Manchuria and Mongolia. Therefore, the Japanese earnestly hoped that Ishii's visit would provide an opportunity to gain recognition from the US of special Japanese interests in Manchuria and Mongolia, as well as China.

Ishii conjectured that since US advocacy of the Monroe Doctrine had resulted in a self-proclaimed American sphere of influence that extended 5,000 miles down to the tip of South America, then surely the Americans would acknowledge Japan's special interests in the destiny of China, from which it was separated only by a narrow strip of ocean. He believed that the US refused to recognize Japan's special interests because American entrepreneurs had begun to focus on China and its 400 million inhabitants as an attractive market, and because Woodrow Wilson had deep-seated personal objections to other major powers' marking out spheres of influence in China.[2]

Disagreement about interpretation of "special interests"

Ishii arrived in the US toward the end of August, and after completing his ceremonial duties, he hastened to Washington, D.C. for negotiations with Secretary of State Robert Lansing. As luck would have it, Lansing was the son-in-law of former Secretary of State John W. Foster, who became an adviser to the Chinese government after leaving the State Department. Consequently, and not unexpectedly, Lansing was a Sinophile.

On November 2, 1917, after hammering out their different points of view, the two men signed an official document, an exchange of notes, at the State Department. That was what is referred to today as the Lansing-Ishii Agreement.

The beginning of the agreement, which states the main point, reads as follows:

> The governments of the United States and Japan recognize that territorial propinquity creates special relations between countries, and, consequently, the government of the United. States recognizes that Japan has special interests in China, particularly in the part to which her possessions are contiguous.[3]

Later we have the following:

> The governments of the United States and Japan deny that they have any purpose to infringe in any way the independence or territorial integrity of China, and they declare, furthermore, that they always adhere to the principle of the so-called "open door" or equal opportunity for commerce and industry in China.[4]

---

[2] Ishii, *op. cit.*

[3] Kajima, *op. cit.*, 312.

[4] *Ibid.*

Here the nuance is a bit different from that of the foregoing passage. And it is the interpretation of this part that left room for subsequent dispute.

Given that the purpose of the agreement was to convince the US to recognize Japan's special interests in China, it was a victory for Japanese diplomacy. However, in actuality, the US had no intention of recognizing those special interests. By applying special wording to the Lansing-Ishii Agreement, the US was attempting to narrow the meaning of "special interests" as they applied to Japan.

On August 11, 1919 at a meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Secretary Lansing was pressed by Sen. William Borah and other Republicans to explain why the Democratic Party had seemed to concede that Japan had special interests in China. Lansing explained that Japan's "special interests in China" as described in the Lansing-Ishii Agreement were economic in nature, not political. But if Lansing's explanation was not intentionally deceptive from the outset (when the agreement was written), then it was simply bluster intended to conceal his own diplomatic defeat.

The reason for this conclusion can be found in Ishii's subsequent counterargument: The first paragraph in the agreement states that Japan's "special interests in China" are not political, but economic and commercial. In that case, it is completely at odds with the language in the second paragraph. Placing the statement about Japan's always adhering to the "principle of the so-called "open door" or equal opportunity for commerce and industry in China" after the statement that says Japan has special economic interests in China renders the words meaningless.

Stopgap American attempt to placate Japan

Why did the US enter into an agreement that caused so many problems, as far as its interpretation was concerned?

Here is Griswold's point of view:

> Unlike the Taft-Katsura Agreement, or the Root-Takahira Agreement, with which it is so often compared, the Lansing-Ishii Agreement was not an intentional reversal, or modification of the American Far Eastern policy. Theodore Roosevelt had acted out of conviction, Lansing out of expediency. Roosevelt followed his executive agreements with Japan with mature expositions of American policy consistent with those agreements. Lansing complained of the circumstances that made necessary his concession to Japan's "special interests;" resorted to legal quibbling to limit their scope and, at Paris, did his best to undo them altogether. In 1917, American diplomacy was preparing, not retreating from, the greatest of all its offensives against Japanese expansion. Whatever comfort Japanese diplomats may have derived from the letter of the agreement, they were soon to discover that its spirit was not one of compromise. It was a stop-gap measure, a temporization, a grudging concession to the gnat of Japanese imperialism when the United States was girding itself to destroy the dragon of German autocracy.[5]

[5] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 217.

Griswold certainly gets to the heart of the matter. The Lansing-Ishii Agreement was a temporary attempt to restrain the Japanese from making further advances in the Far East while the Americans were preoccupied with a European war. That is precisely why after the war had ended, the US made a concerted (and successful) effort to discard that agreement. As I shall explain later, the Lansing-Ishii Agreement was deemed to have lost its *raison d'être* when the Nine-Power Treaty was concluded at the Washington Conference, and was abrogated in April 1923.

Here are, in part, Ishii's remarks about the abrogation, written in later years.

> But the phrase "Japan's special interests in China," as I have repeatedly stated above, merely described the actual conditions resulting from natural topography: those interests were not the gift of the United States. Mr. Lansing and I merely filled, so to say, the rôles of photographers. Even if we destroy the positive print because the finished photograph does not suit the taste of present-day Americans, the negative still remains. If we destroy even the negative, what can we do when the material object still remains? … Even if the Lansing-Ishii Agreement is abolished, Japan's special interests in China remain there unshaken. The special interests which Japan possesses in China neither were created by an international agreement nor can they become the object of abolition.[6]

The foregoing was most certainly the Japanese perception of Japan's special interests prevailing at that time.

[6] Ishii, *op. cit.*

CHAPTER 5: JAPAN AND WORLD WAR I

3. PERSPECTIVES ON THE SIBERIAN EXPEDITION

An exercise in futility?

In 1917, while World War I was still raging, the most momentous event of the 20th century — the Russian Revolution — began. The revolution provided fertile ground for communism's rise to real political power, with which the majority of subsequent wars, political conflicts, and tragedies were deeply entwined. Communism also insinuated itself into and complicated disputes between Japan and the US over China.

During the chaotic years that followed the Russian Revolution came the Siberian Intervention, in which Japan participated along with the other Allies. Japan's contribution to that venture was perceived as having depleted the national treasury, needlessly wasted soldiers' lives, and earned the enmity of the Russian people. Moreover, it was soundly castigated as a military action from which nothing was gained, and disparaged by historians. It earned the reputation of an exercise in futility, as history books often described it. One account in a history textbook intended for Japanese high school students reads as follows:

> Fearing the aftereffects of the Russian Revolution, Japan, the US, Britain, and France launched the Siberian Intervention in 1918, under the pretext of rescuing the Czech Corps. All nations involved, except for Japan, withdrew their troops in 1920. But the Japanese, intent on strengthening their presence in eastern Siberia, continued to send and reinforce troops there until 1922. However, they encountered resistance from revolutionaries and local residents. In the end, they had nothing to show for their efforts except 3,000 dead, 20,000 wounded, and ¥1,000 million in war expenditures.[1]

Accounts in other textbooks are quite similar. However, by dismissing the entire Siberian Intervention, the authors deprive students of the opportunity to learn about the problems that plagued the various expeditions and about their historical significance. The Siberian Intervention was an undertaking which, in terms of gaining an understanding of the Allies' perception of and response to communism, and the events that followed it, provides much food for thought.

When we contemplate international politics of that time, and the events that followed, i.e., the flow of history up to this very day, especially the spread of communism and political crimes, we must conclude that Japan's Siberian Expedition, regardless of its consequences or effectiveness, did have historical value. I will now submit a summary of the expedition, tracing its progress and indicating the problems that arose.

[1] *Kaitei Nihonshi* (Japanese history: revised edition) (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 1989).

Appeal for Japanese participation

In March 1917 what is now called the February Revolution broke out in Russia, and Alexander Kerensky established an interim government; Romanov rule had come to an end. In November of the same year, the Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin, overthrew Kerensky's government in what came to be called the October Revolution. Communist Russia had taken its first steps. These revolutions threw all of Russia into chaos; Siberia and northern Manchuria were no exceptions. Moreover, the Soviet government, having won over the populace with its "peace, land, and bread" slogan, extricated Russia from the war with Germany.

On January 1, 1918 Britain appealed to Japan to lead an expedition to Siberia, whose purpose would be to prevent the Germans from taking possession of more than 600,000 tons of munitions that had accumulated in Vladivostok. Yet another request to send troops! Britain's request for Japan to act as the Allies' consignee in Siberia was supported by France. A consultation with the US revealed that Woodrow Wilson was vehemently opposed to a Japanese expedition, especially an independent one, even as a consignee of the Allies.

The proposal from Britain and France for a joint expedition gave rise to a debate. The Japanese government found itself pitted against military authorities. The doves worried about US opposition, and were convinced that interfering militarily in Siberia without American approval would be a dangerous diplomatic choice. On March 19 the Japanese government responded as follows: "Japan is prepared to support the joint Allied objective. However, our participation would depend on the support of *all* the Allies. We shall refrain from taking any action whatsoever until we have reached an understanding with the US and all other Allied nations."

However, in mid-May, the situation in Russia changed abruptly. On May 14 at Chelyabinsk Station in the Urals there was a clash between the Czech Corps heading east and a unit of German and Austro-Hungarian prisoners of war being repatriated. This incident escalated and turned into an encounter between the Czechoslovaks and Bolsheviks. Soon the conflict spread to the entire Trans-Siberian Railway.

At this point I would like to provide some background information: The Czech Corps[2] consisted of Czech[3] immigrants who had been in Russia since the imperial days, and Austro-Hungarian deserters. Their numbers were sufficient to form approximately two divisions. In 1917 the provisional Russian government permitted them to join the Russian forces in the Eastern theatre. The Czech Corps believed that the Allied victory would mean independence for Czechoslovakia or, at the very least, autonomy; they were vehemently anti-Habsburg, and delighted to be fighting on the side of the Russians. When German troops began penetrating Ukraine at the end of February 1918, the Czech Corps was forced to evacuate to avoid being encircled and captured by German troops. The Czech Corps officially became affiliated with the Allies, and now answered to the French Supreme Command. The French government and Czechoslovak Military Headquarters wanted to dispatch the Corps to the western front to fight the Germans. As there was no other

[2] More accurately, the Czechoslovak Corps.

[3] Czech and Slovak.

reasonable way to exit Russia at the time, the Corps retreated from Vladivostok via Siberia. By the end of March the first party had departed for the Urals and Siberia. By the middle of May, 15,000 of them had reached Vladivostok. The remainder were in the midst of a 3,000-mile journey by rail, from the west side of the Volga River in Central Russia to Irkutsk. Nearly 40,000 men were involved.

Anti-Bolshevik Russians supported the Czech Corps, hoping they would overthrow the communists. Within a few days after the revolution began, the Czech Corps occupied the 3,000-mile-long Trans-Siberian Railway from the Volga to the vicinity of Irkutsk without much difficulty, and together with the White Army, took control of the vast surrounding area. In other words, the Czech Corps' uprising overthrew the Soviet government in the Urals and most of western Siberia.

Here is American diplomat and historian George F. Kennan's perspective:

> Soviet propagandists have never ceased to charge the Allies with having instigated the Czech uprising. The charge is in fact false, but its political implications are not far short of the mark.[4]

On June 7, in accordance with a resolution passed by the Allied Supreme War Council, Britain requested that Japan dispatch troops to Siberia. In response, the Japanese responded that the Imperial government "attach great importance to the positive support of the [American Government] in considering any action of intervention in Siberia. … Accordingly, a reply has been sent in the sense that the Japanese Government, while deeply appreciating the proposal, could not feel at liberty to express their decision before a complete and satisfactory understanding on the question was reached between the three Powers and the United States."[5]

The Allied Supreme War Council appealed to Wilson to sanction a joint expedition, as it was indispensable to an Allied victory, and could not be done properly without Japanese participation, but Japan could not take effective action without the support of the US. The US Supreme War Council resolved to dispatch approximately 7,000 troops each from Japan and the US to Vladivostok, and to announce that the objective of the expedition would be to assist the Czech Corps in its actions against German and Austrian prisoners of war. On August 2 Japan announced it would be participating in a joint expedition to Siberia; the US issued a similar announcement on August 3.

Japan dispatched the 12th Division, commanded by Ōi Shigemoto, to Maritime province (Primorskaya). He and his men commenced their landing on August 12. The US sent a regiment from the Philippines, Britain sent one battalion from Hong Kong, and France sent one and a half battalions from Indochina; all of those units departed for Vladivostok in early August. Even China and Italy volunteered, the former sending two infantry battalions to Nikolsk-Ussuriysky at the end of August, and the latter formed a battalion from troops who had been stationed in Beijing; those units arrived in Siberia in late November. The joint Allied expedition was now ready to take action.

---

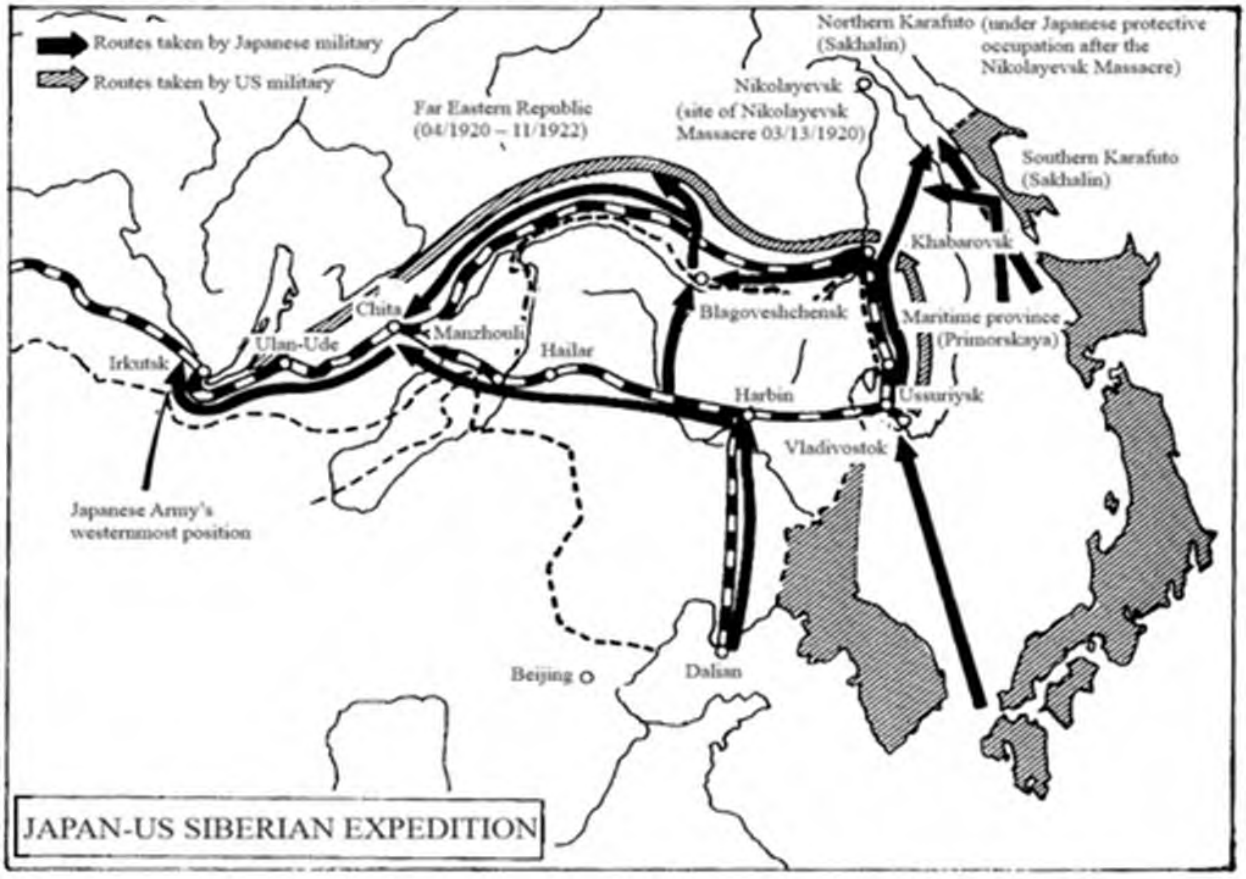
[4] Kennan, George F., *Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin* (Boston; Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1961), 98-99.

[5] *Foreign Relations*, *The Lansing Papers, 1914-1920*, Vol. II, p. 365.

Suspicious of Japan but accepting of communism

Today the cooperative effort between Japan and the US is referred to as the Japan-US joint expedition. However, Griswold, the American historian, does not see it quite that way.

> The background of this extraordinary venture was partly European, partly Far Eastern. … Since the announced purpose of both expeditions was the same, these discrepancies are enough to show that the American motives for taking part in each were different. In European Russia the United States was at first genuinely concerned with the protection of Allied military supplies and assisting the Russian elements that gave any evidence of wishing to fight Germany to do so. In the Far East its purpose first and last was to resist the Japanese penetration of northern Manchuria and Siberia.[6]



[6] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 226-27.

As Griswold writes, the US military were suspicious of Japan's reasons for joining the expedition. They did not aid the Japanese military in their battles with the Bolsheviks. In fact, they seemed favorably disposed toward the Bolsheviks. Some even characterized the joint intervention as a collaborative expedition with no collaboration.

Why were the Japanese and Americans so antagonistic to each other in Siberia? The answer may lie in the two nations' differing stances on Bolshevism (communism).

While the Japanese advancing into Siberia were certain that Russian communism was a dangerous ideology and believed the Bolsheviks were evil, the Americans did not share that view.

After all, the Bolsheviks had toppled a despotic government, and on that point they seemed to be kindred spirits of Europeans and Americans — advocates of democracy. It even seemed to the Americans as though by participating in the expedition to Siberia, the Japanese would be violating the Open Door Policy. Yes, at that time, the American Open Door Policy extended even to Siberia. The US had schemed to isolate the Japanese in front of world public opinion. In January 1920 the US expeditionary force suddenly withdrew without so much as a notification from the US government.

To use the words of Roland S. Morris, US ambassador to Japan, "If General Graves has interpreted his orders [to leave Siberia in January 1920] correctly, our sudden action, without any previous notice to the Japanese Government, is a stunning blow to Japanese pride as well as to all Liberal and pro-American influence here and will have, I fear, far-reaching effects.[7]"

The communization of far eastern Russia was of great concern to Japan, as it represented an immense threat to Manchuria and Korea. But to the Americans, situated far, far away across the Pacific, the thought hardly registered, if at all.

Payson Treat wrote the following about this perception gap:

> It goes without saying that there were many conflicting views as to what should be done in Siberia. Americans might have an academic interest in what went on there, for Bolsheviki control would not endanger any American territory. But for the Japanese it was a very vital problem, and the presence of a Red Government at Vladivostok, so near to Korea where discontent was rife, could not be considered without alarm. For these reasons, Japan sent in more troops than had been anticipated … we must sympathize with her for being like the man in the Chinese proverb who tried to ride a tiger — it was easy to get on, but extremely difficult to get off.[8]

[7] Hosoya Chihiro, Roshia kakumei to Nihon (The Russian Revolution and Japan) (Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1972); *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, 861.00/6113: Telegram from the Ambassador in Japan (Morris) to the Secretary of State, 11 January 1920.

[8] Treat, *op. cit.*, 228-29.

Not all US government officials were blind to the danger posed by communism to the Far East. In fact, on November 30, 1919, Secretary Lansing wrote the following in his diary:

> I cannot see how the Japanese Government can adopt any other policy in view of the very real peril to Japan if the Bolsheviks should gain a foothold in Manchuria and co-operate with the Korean revolutionists. Certainly, in the circumstances we ought not to raise any objection to Japan sending a sufficient force to check the Bolshevik advance, for the spread of Bolshevism in the Far East would be a dreadful menace to civilization.[9]

Lansing clearly appreciated Japan's efforts to prevent the spread of communism. It is truly unfortunate for Asia — for the entire world, for that matter — that discerning supporters of Japan like Lansing were few and far between.

[9] Tansill, *op. cit.*, 56.

CHAPTER 5: JAPAN AND WORLD WAR I

4. THE NIKOLAYEVSK MASSACRE

Rape, slaughter, unimaginable atrocities

At the beginning of 1920 the objective of the Siberian expedition, i.e., the rescue of the Czech Corps, was near fruition. At that point the Japanese narrowed their operations down to the direct defense of their Manchurian and Korean interests, announcing their plan to withdraw troops in the near future. But then, a totally unexpected incident arose — an event of an unspeakable nature: the Nikolayevsk Massacre.

Japan's historians, history textbooks, and newspapers are wont to exaggerate atrocities allegedly committed by Japanese troops. But for some inexplicable reason, they have been silent about the worst massacre of the 20th century, one in which more than 700 Japanese fell victim to communists. It was just as if Japan's chroniclers had turned a blind eye to the tragedy, and made a concerted effort to expunge it from Japan's collective memory and from the pages of history.

Nikolayevsk is a town situated on the bank of the Amur River opposite Sakhalin, where the river's estuary flows into the Sea of Okhotsk. At the beginning of 1920 Nikolayevsk was inhabited by approximately 750 Japanese: civilians, an Army garrison, and a Navy signal corps. When Allied troops withdrew, 4,000 communist partisans (Russians, Koreans, and Chinese) surrounded and besieged the town. The partisans entered into a truce with the Japanese garrison, which turned out to be a ruse, and took control of Nikolayevsk. They then proceeded to establish a revolutionary court that held trials and executed the "guilty." On March 12, the third anniversary of the Russian Revolution, fighting broke out between the communists and Japanese soldiers. The communists annihilated most of the garrison and threw some 150 civilians into prison.

A Navy officer who was in Nikolayevsk at the time and witnessed the atrocities, managed, with great difficulty, to escape to Vladivostok. He kept an account of the atrocities committed by the communist partisans as he witnessed them, which appeared in the 20 April 1920 edition of the *Osaka Mainichi Shinbun*.

> The radicals did not act on the spur of the moment. They had obviously made careful plans.
>
> During the first phase of their savagery, Russians were their victims. The communists surrounded the homes of wealthy Russians. After brazenly robbing them of all their assets, they herded all residents — old and young, men and women — into their houses and barricaded all exits from the outside. Then the communists set fire to the houses and, showing no remorse whatsoever, incinerated their inhabitants.
>
> The targets of the communists' second phase were pro-Japanese Russian intelligentsia. They robbed, raped, and slaughtered intellectuals, unleashing pitiless brutality against their unfortunate victims, whether government officials or private citizens. During the third phase, the monsters ruthlessly and unrelentingly bared their poisonous fangs, this time setting upon my compatriots. Finding words to

describe such unspeakable brutality seems an unbearable, impossible task, but at the same time, I feel driven to speak for the precious souls of the victims, and for the sake of benevolence and justice throughout the world as well. I hope those who read this will understand.

The mob of rioters then gathered in a public space, where they satisfied their loathsome lust at the expense of my female compatriots. Their depravity knew no limits, as they amused themselves by severing their victims' limbs, slashing or chopping off fingers, arms, and legs, making certain to cause as much pain as possible during their murderous rampage.

The atrocities knew no end. The shameless attackers placed two horses side by side and selected their next Japanese victim, male or female, it mattered not to them. They tied one of their quarry's legs tightly to the saddle of one horse and the other leg to the saddle of the other. When the horses were turned loose and sped off, the victim's body was soon torn apart. I cannot imagine a more painful death. The communists clearly enjoyed the spectacle, whooping and guffawing with pleasure, and jeering at the poor victims. Their voices joined together in a chorus — a chorus of jubilant savages. I cannot find words to describe their brutal, heinous acts, which even the most savage beast would never commit. Is there anyone in the world, has there ever been anyone since the founding of our empire, who could find it in their hearts to forgive these enemies of humanity itself?

My countrymen and women, having wept and wept until no more tears would come, made a firm resolve: "If we must die, we shall all die together. We shall depart from this fleeting existence, falling like cherry blossoms. We shall stay together and help each other." They then sought refuge at the consulate. Then the communist mob seized all the assets belonging to my compatriots, residents of the town, and proceeded to commit other acts of violence, burning and destroying everything in their path. Still, both our soldiers and consular staff members, knowing that they were outnumbered, suppressed their grief and anger, and took great pains to avoid confrontations with the attackers, instead exercising perseverance and prudence. However, the angry mob grew more and more violent with every passing moment, and began shooting at the consulate. The building was soon engulfed in flames, and those inside then realized that they were doomed.

At that moment all the Japanese, men and women alike, rose to action. They resolved to defend themselves by confronting the enemy. Every man among them took up a weapon and launched into a defensive battle, fighting stubbornly, together with the remaining garrison soldiers. Nor did the women shrink from danger. Rather than fall victim to the vicious monsters, they would die bravely, together with the soldiers. All of them raised their arms, vowed they would fight to the death, and immediately took action.

Nevertheless, no matter how hard they fought, they continued to lose ground. Moment by moment, their numbers decreased. Eventually, even the frail women took up the rifles and pistols once brandished by their dead comrades, and while receiving hasty instructions about loading and shooting the weapons, joined in the fighting. With their hearts full of regret, they made a final, valiant attempt against the enemy, and every last one of them died a heroic death. In the end, there was

> hardly anyone left to fight. They had no more ammunition and had exhausted all their strength. But the few courageous women who had survived, along with wounded men who could still move, somehow managed to summon up the will to fight. They made a final, desperate attempt to fend off the enemy, together, until they breathed their last within the roaring flames.

Handwriting on the wall bears witness

When the snow and ice had melted to some extent, Japan dispatched reinforcements to Nikolayevsk. But in early May, before they could arrive, the communists had slaughtered every single Japanese they had imprisoned. Out of 12,000 Nikolayevsk residents, the mob had massacred approximately 6,000 souls who were opposed to communism. After setting fire to the town, they burned it to the ground and fled. Among the victims were Vice-Consul Ishida Toramatsu, his wife, 384 civilian Japanese residents of Nikolayevsk (among them 184 women and children), and 351 Japanese soldiers. The communists had raped, tortured, and slaughtered some 750 Japanese.

Two weeks after the massacre, eight Japanese war correspondents visited the crime scene. The following is an excerpt from their report on that visit as it appeared in the 13 June 1920 edition of *Jiji Shinpō*.

> Of Nikolayevsk, which extends approximately 6 km from north to south, and 10 km from east to west, only the chimneys of Russian stoves remained. Everywhere we looked, we saw only desolation. Brick houses had been blown up and reduced to rubble. Wooden houses had burned to the ground, leaving no trace behind. Charred telephone poles were lying on the ground. Our feet became entangled in electric wires that had been knocked down. Scattered throughout the burned rubble were articles of women's clothing, shoes, cooking pots, children's cots, and other household goods.
>
> The prison was in the northern part of the town. As soon as we arrived there, we entered one section that had escaped the flames. Overcome by a terrible stench, all of us recoiled. That part of the building had been divided into eight rooms. We were immediately confronted with horrifying sights. Spoiled rice balls were scattered around, and the walls were spattered with what looked like fresh blood. A woman's red sash was hanging on a nail. There was graffiti on the walls, most of it in Room No. 2, where someone had written "Never forget May 24, 1920 at 12 p.m." Next to it was a drawing of the face of a clock that read "12:00." We also saw several haiku:
>
> *The sun will soon rise*
> *I lie awake worrying*
> *Then the cuckoo calls*
>
> *How splendid it is*
> *When someone admires flowers*
> *That bloomed this morning*
>
> Another poem:
>
> *Yesterday misfortune seemed so far away*
> *But now it has befallen me*

> Elsewhere on the wall someone had written *Bushidō.* Most of the graffiti were written in pencil on the white-painted walls. Particularly heart-rending was a chart showing the calendar days written in red pencil. It began with May 19 and ended with June 23. Each day was crossed out up to May 24; the rest were unmarked. On the night of May 24, all 140 prisoners were dragged out of their jail, marched to the bank of the Amur River, stabbed to death and thrown into the water.
>
> Our group of journalists paced back and forth for a short while, imagining the agonies of our countrymen. Then we headed for the riverbank. In front of the shipbuilding factory was a 650-square-foot vacant lot whose surface was soaked with blood, now turning black. The blood of our compatriots! We made more gruesome discoveries: blood-drenched ropes used to bind the victims; a cotton crepe shirt soaked with fresh blood that someone had retrieved from the river; more blood, huge amounts of it, splattered on the side of a boat. We were forced to avert our eyes! We imagined our compatriots suppressing their rage and regret as they succumbed to the poisonous blades on this terrible shore. We could not take even one step forward without treading on their blood!
>
> We paid a call on Commander Tsuno Kazusuke. His eyes brimming with tears, Maj.-Gen. Tsuno said, "Every single one of our compatriots is dead. But while our grief is unbearable, I am heartened by the knowledge that every one of them fought bravely to the end, never resorting to mean or cowardly behavior.

At the end of his account of the Nikolayevsk Massacre in *History of the Japanese People (Meiji and Taishō Eras*), historian Shiroyanagi Shūko writes, "Seven hundred of our compatriots, both young and old, fell victim to evil monsters — communist partisans — and for a long time became demons on the Amur River. The torments the communists inflicted on our innocent compatriots were cruel beyond description. As long as there is humanity in this world, it is unlikely that any historian will be able to summon up the courage to write about the massacre."[1] However, when one reads both the naval officer's account and the journalists' report, it is possible to imagine how terribly shocked the Japanese public was by the sheer brutality of the massacre.

Since the Meiji era, Japan's conservatives (the so-called right wing) have wholeheartedly supported ethnic revolutionaries in neighboring nations. However, they have consistently demonstrated wariness and repudiation of communist revolutions, and that stance can certainly be attributed to the Nikolayevsk Massacre. Reports of this incident should be disseminated more widely and memorialized so that it occupies its rightful place in political and intellectual history.

Japanese perspicacity about communist aggression0

Called the worst affront to Japan since the Mongolian invasions of the 13th century, the Nikolayevsk Massacre did indeed enrage the Japanese people. Unsurprisingly, their hatred toward Russia grew. Japanese troops placed the northern half of Sakhalin under protective occupation, which significantly delayed their withdrawal from Siberia.

[1] Shiroyanagi Shūko, *Meiji Taishō kokumin shi 1-5* (History of the Japanese people: Meiji and Taishō eras, 5 vols.) (Tokyo: Chikura Shobō, 1936).

Earlier in this chapter I included an excerpt from a dismissive account about Japan's Siberian Expedition in a Japanese textbook. I believe that readers will now perceive the extent to which that account distorts the historical significance of Japan's contribution. Additionally, I hope that the publication's editorial policy will be revealed for exactly what it is, i.e., an attempt to give the impression that in participating, Japan had aggressive, ulterior motives. I do not think I need to tell readers who had more insight into history — the Americans, who believed that the Bolsheviks were democrats at heart, and who interfered with the Japanese expedition, using the Open Door Policy in north Manchuria and Siberia as a pretext — or the Japanese, who kept their troops in Siberia to prevent the spread of communism from Siberia to Manchuria and Korea. Communism did, however, infiltrate Manchuria and Korea from Siberia, and in doing so, strongly affected the course of history. Today we know it gave rise to the Manchurian Incident, the 2nd Sino-Japanese War, and ultimately, the Greater East Asian War.

Even today, 70 years later, the "open door" to Siberia and Maritime province remains completely closed to the US and all other non-Soviet states. Obviously, the unshakable American conviction that keeping the Japanese from making inroads in those areas would result in an open-door policy in Siberia was wrong. Here is historian Charles Tansill's view:

> As a result of numerous conferences dealing with the Far East it was finally decided to send General William S. Graves with a small army (9,014 officers and men) to Siberia to co-operate with an Allied expeditionary force. The duties assigned to this force were to assist the Czechs, help steady genuine Russian efforts at self-government and self-defense, and to guard Allied military stores. The force under Graves stayed in Siberia from August 1918 until April 1920. Its sole achievement was to save the maritime provinces of Siberia for the ruthless rule of Red Russia.[2]

To this I add the opinion of George Bronson Rea, long-time editor in chief of Shanghai-based *Far Eastern Review*:

> Had Japan been permitted to act alone in Siberia, the Communist program for the domination of Asia would never have passed the paper stage. … The dispatch of an American army to Siberia made Asia safe for Communism. …[3]

[2] Tansill, *op. cit.*, 53-54.

[3] George Bronson Rea, *The Case for Manchoukuo* (New York: Appleton-Century Company, 1935), 341-42.

CHAPTER 6: US RETALIATION: WASHINGTON NAVAL CONFERENCE

1. CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING UP TO WASHINGTON NAVAL CONFERENCE

Japan's proposals to the Washington Conference

The Armistice of November 11 was signed in 1918, bringing the European war, which had persisted for four years and four months, to an end. As one of the five powers, Japan participated in the peace conference that commenced in January 1919, along with Britain, the US, France, and Italy. There were 23 other nations represented, for a total of 28.

Japan's agenda for the conference included three main items: (1) continued control of former German interests in Shandong province, (2) conveyance to Japan of former German possessions north of the equator in the Pacific, and (3) a proposal for the abolition of racial discrimination (the Racial Equality Proposal).

The Chinese were pleading for recovery of Shandong province, in spite of the fact that they had made no investment in whatsoever toward that end. It was the Japanese who had made the sacrifices and borne the costs. Chinese justified their appeal by claiming that when they declared war against Germany, in August 1917, all treaties concluded between China and Germany had been terminated. Therefore, all former German interests, including Shandong province, should revert directly to China.

Japanese and Chinese claims were in direct conflict, but China's demands were rejected. The transfer of German interests in Shandong to Japan was recognized in Articles 156-58 of the Treaty of Versailles. The Chinese expressed their dissatisfaction by refusing to sign the treaty. The US Senate, too, refused to ratify the treaty because of opposition to the League of Nations. Incidentally, the May Fourth Movement, an anti-Japanese campaign that erupted in China in 1919, was triggered in part by the Shandong problem.

Japan's request for transfer of former German possessions in the South Pacific was easily approved because Japan had signed an agreement with Britain, France, and Italy during the war. Japan was awarded a League of Nations Mandate for the Mariana Islands, the Marshall Islands, the Caroline Islands, and other islands north of the equator.

The Japanese submitted the Racial Equality Proposal as a matter of principle, not a demand for practical rewards. Behind it was, of course, the Japanese immigration problem. But Japan's proposal met with unyielding intransigence from the "white" nations.

The final version of the proposal suggested inserting the text shown below in italics into the preamble of the covenant, which begins.

> THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES,
> In order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security
> by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war,

> by the prescription of open, just and honourable relations between nations,
> by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments, and
> by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organised peoples with one another,
>
> *by the endorsement of the principle of equality of nations and just treatment of their nationals,*
>
> Agree to this Covenant of the League of Nations.

The Japanese wished to make part of Japan's stance on racial equality explicit by adding the proposed text. Eleven of the 17 delegates of the League of Nations Commission members voted in favor of the Racial Equality Proposal. However, Japan's proposal was not adopted because Woodrow Wilson, the Commission's chairman, insisted that the vote be unanimous. If it had been adopted in 1919, the Immigration Act of 1924 would surely not come into being, and one of the causes of conflict between Japan and the US might have been eliminated. The realization that this occurrence was a crossroads between war and peace, fills me with disappointment.

Still, it is true that the European war provided Japan with ample opportunities. Japan took over German interests in Shandong province, and problems relating to the Twenty-One Demands were settled with treaties between Japan and China in 1915. The Lansing-Ishii Agreement, signed in 1917, won American recognition for Japanese special interests in Manchuria. Moreover, the Japanese sphere of influence in the Pacific region expanded with the South Seas Mandate (the League of Nations mandate for former German possessions in the Pacific Ocean). All of these were the fruit of Japanese military and diplomatic endeavors. They were also, without exaggeration, the rewards for the sacrifice of Japanese blood, tears, and sweat, beginning in the Meiji era.

New conflict between Japan and US

Unfortunately, there was no rejoicing in the US over Japan's achievements. At the Paris Peace Conference, China was defeated by Japan, and the US was unable to block rapid Japanese progress. The opportunity for the US to retaliate against Japan in earnest did not arrive for about two more years. The stage this time was the Washington Naval Conference, held in Washington, D.C. between November 1921 and February 1922. The US issued the invitations for this international conference involving nine nations: the US, Britain, Japan, France, Italy, China, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Belgium. On the schedule were naval disarmament and questions involving the Pacific and the Far East. The gathering became known as the Washington Conference, and it has great historical importance in that it determined the framework and direction of the Japan-US relationship from 1922 to the outbreak of the Greater East Asian War.

After World War I, Germany no longer had a Far Eastern or Pacific presence. The Russians needed to concern themselves with the civil war that followed the revolution, and thus had no surplus energy. Although France had colonized Indochina and retained concessions in China, French influence in the region had significantly decreased. However, since the war, the US had demonstrated its strength by becoming the world's creditor nation. It refused to sign the Treaty of Versailles, having shifted its focus from Europe to the Far East. And it was at that point that the

US began to confront Japan head on, after Japan had made great inroads into Manchuria, Mongolia, China, and the Pacific during the war.

The new rivalry between Japan and the US was one of the primary reasons for convening the Washington Conference. I will now discuss some of the factors at work.

Anglo-Japanese Alliance

The 10-year term of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which was revised in July of 1911, was scheduled to expire in November 1921. However, the world had changed greatly during those 10 years: Russia had been brought to her knees by the revolution, and Germany had retreated from the Far East. Consequently, there was little reason to keep the alliance alive.

Given that threats from Russia and Germany had vanished, the US wanted the alliance discarded, since keeping it would place the US in the position of a hypothetical enemy nation. Another reason to oppose it was the Americans' conviction that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, if it continued to exist, would give Japan free rein in China. Japan, of course, was hoping that it would endure. The matter was discussed at the Imperial Conference held between June and August 1921. Britain, Australia, India, and New Zealand had no objections to keeping it, but Canada, the US' next-door neighbor, was vehemently opposed. Thus Britain, searching desperately for a compromise, suggested that a conference be held among Japan, Britain, the US, and China to discuss the matter. Unfortunately, it was just then that the US proposed the naval disarmament conference.

Problems in the Far East and Pacific

The Lansing-Ishii Agreement was essentially an improvised affair intended to appease Japan for the duration of the war. When the conflict came to an end, the US attempted to dispose of it. Moreover, the fact that Japan's claims on Shandong province prevailed at the Paris Peace Conference gave rise to further controversy, both public and private, in the US. Also, as a result of the discrepancy between the two nations' perceptions of their Siberian expeditions, hostility intensified between them. The US was attempting to broaden the boundaries of its Open Door Policy, which it had already been advocating for China, and to include even Maritime province in Russia. There were problems in the South Pacific as well, one of them being the Yap islands in the South Pacific. Japan's occupation of the islands had been recognized at the Paris Peace Conference. But the US wanted them removed from Japanese control because they were situated southeast of Guam, and thus at a key point for submarine cable communication.

Naval arms race

The starting point for the building of American naval strength can be found in the ideas of 19th-century strategist Adm. Alfred Thayer Mahan. When Theodore Roosevelt was Secretary of the Navy, he found that Mahan's "big navy" advocacy resonated with him. In later years, after he had become president, Roosevelt laid the foundation for that big navy, saying that asking Congress to build a Navy that ranks first in the world was his solemn responsibility as president.

When the Russo-Japanese War concluded, the US Navy could not have boasted that it was more powerful than its Japanese counterpart. But later the US began to perceive Japan as its most formidable rival and became acutely aware of how important naval prowess was to its foreign-policy objectives, chiefly the Open Door policy. The US therefore resumed its naval construction

program, aiming for second-best navy in the world. World War I only accelerated that momentum. In August 1916 the US decided upon a three-year project involving the construction of more than 150 ships, aiming to build a navy second to none. Obviously this program was perceived as a threat to Japan. Therefore, in 1917, the year after Congress passed the Naval Expansion Act, Japan came up with a plan for an Eight-Four Fleet (eight battleships and four cruisers), then in 1918, one for an Eight-Six Fleet, and in 1920, another for an Eight-Eight Fleet (eight battleships and eight cruisers).

Journalist and naval enthusiast Hector C. Bywater wrote about those years in *Navies and Nations*:

> For a year or more [Japan] had observed with growing uneasiness the magnitude of American naval preparations, coupled as they were with an avowed intention of obtaining the supremacy of the seas. Her own interests were confined to the Pacific, and it was in that ocean that the United States was massing its forces. In August, 1919, the strongest squadrons of the U.S. Navy had passed through the Panama Canal to form the newly-organized Pacific Fleet. These movements coincided with the publication of plans for developing Pacific fleet bases on a large scale. Extensive naval works were projected in the Philippines, Guam, and Samoa; Pearl Harbour, Hawaii, was to be converted into a "Gibraltar of the Pacific."
>
> Japan could not but feel herself to be the objective of these naval activities. She retorted by adopting, in 1920, the famous "eight-eight" programme, designed eventually to give her a fleet at least equal, and probably superior, to that of the United States.[1]

When we look at the naval construction race between Japan and the US, not in terms of monetary strength, but from the standpoint of facilities (docks and harbors) and shipbuilding expertise, we see that Japan clearly had the advantage over the US. The Americans finally came to perceive the difficulties inherent in this rivalry. Moreover, the American naval program ended up stimulating British, as well as Japanese, naval expansion. Not only did the naval arms race among three great naval powers and the concomitant sense of urgency become important facets of world politics, but it also produced a crushing financial burden for the nations involved. Therefore, the US, in a move to extricate itself from a predicament it had brought upon itself, decided to convene an international conference to discuss naval disarmament. Its objectives were to keep the navies of Japan and Britain in check, block Japanese expansion into the Pacific region, and pave the way for US expansion into the Far East. The Washington Conference was, actually and essentially, a political duel between Japan and the US.

I have just described the international situation on the eve of the Washington Conference. In March 1921, onto that scene stepped Warren G. Harding, the 29th president of the US, known for his advocacy of a return to normalcy. He reversed Wilson's idealistic policies, choosing "America

[1] Bywater, Hector C., *Navies and Nations: A Review of Naval Developments Since the Great War* (London: Constable & Co., Ltd., 1927), 113-14.

first” as his motto. Harding shifted his diplomatic focus from Europe to the Far East. Since the Russo-Japanese War, American policies intended to obstruct Japanese inroads into China had, without exception, failed. But now the opportunity to prevent the Japanese from making further advances into China and the Pacific had arrived. In July 1921 Harding proposed an international conference to be held in Washington, D.C, at which discussions of both naval disarmament and Far Eastern affairs would be held, issuing invitations to Japan, Britain, France, Italy, China, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Portugal.

CHAPTER 6: US REATLIATION: WASHINGTON NAVAL CONFEREANCE

2. RESULTS OF THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

Freezing of the Pacific

First, we have the Washington Naval Treaty (also known as the Five-Power Treaty and Treaty Between the Five Powers Concerning the Limitation of Naval Armament). Its three essential points are listed below.

(1) Respective ratios of capital ships to be held by each of the signatories was set as follows:

Britain	5
United States	5
Japan	3
France	1.75
Italy	1.75

(2) Capital ships under construction were to be scrapped; no capital ships were to be built for the next 10 years.

(3) Capital ships were limited to 35,000 tons standard displacement and guns with a caliber no larger than 16 inches (406 millimeters); aircraft carriers were limited to 27,000 tons standard displacement and guns with a caliber no larger than 8 inches.

(4) Cruisers were limited to 10,000 tons standard displacement and guns with a caliber no larger than 8 inches; no limits were placed on their construction.

(5) The status quo, with regard to fortifications and naval bases, would be maintained; no new fortifications, naval bases, or coastal defenses would be constructed in the territories listed below:

(A) The insular possessions which the United States now holds or may hereafter acquire in the Pacific Ocean, except those adjacent to the coast of the United States, Alaska and the Panama Canal Zone, and the Hawaiian Islands; [1]

(B) Hong Kong and the insular possessions which the British Empire now holds or may hereafter acquire in the Pacific Ocean, east of the meridian of 110° east longitude, except those adjacent to the coast of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia and its Territories, and New Zealand;

[1] Consequently, the US abandoned the idea of fortifying Guam, Pago Pago, the Philippines, and the Aleutians.

(C) The Chishima (Kurile) Islands, the Ogasawara (Bonin) Islands, the Ryūkyū Islands, Taiwan and the Pescadores Islands and any insular territories or possessions in the Pacific Ocean which Japan may hereafter acquire.

The US had succeeded in limiting the number of Japanese capital ships to 60% of those possessed by Britain and the US. In exchange, it was agreed that the status quo in the Pacific (referred to as the "freezing of the Pacific") would be preserved. The treaty prohibited the Japanese, British, and Americans from building new fortifications on the Pacific islands in their possession. But exceptions were made for the US (Hawaii) and Britain (Singapore). Both nations were permitted to fortify those territories at their discretion. The Americans reinforced Hawaii, which would serve as an important advance base for the US military, and Britain made Singapore its major citadel in the Far East.

Because of this historical background, no sooner had the Greater East Asian War broken out than the Japanese attacked both Hawaii and Singapore. These naval construction limitations enabled the US to pursue its aspiration: the construction of a navy second to none.

Trading whiskey for water: termination of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance

Next, we have the termination of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The Americans looked askance at the notion of renewing the alliance (the third Anglo-Japanese Alliance was scheduled to expire in July 1921) and hoped it would be abrogated. As already stated, they suspected that with the threat from Imperial Russia now gone, it was possible that the US might be forced into a war against Britain and Japan. Of greater concern to the Americans, however, was the likelihood that the alliance would further encourage Japanese inroads into China. Japan and Britain were in favor of continuing with the alliance, but since neither could ignore the US, the Four-Power Treaty (signed by Japan, Britain, US, and France) was concluded in its stead. The announcement of the termination of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance appears in Article IV of that treaty.

Thus the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the pillar of Japanese diplomacy for 21 long years, came to an end in August 1923.

This was a cause for rejoicing for the US. President Harding described the obtaining of an agreement whereby the Anglo-Japanese Alliance would be immediately terminated as "a matter of the greatest gratification."[2] [3]

[2] In fact, these words were not those of President Harding, but of the American Delegation in a report presented to Harding. See Office of the Historian, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922, Volume 1: Report of the American Delegation, February 9, 1922.* *https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1922v01/d88*.

[3] Kohsaku Tamura, "Genesis of the Pacific War (I)," CONTEMPORARY JAPAN: A Review of East Asiatic Affairs Vol. XII, No. 2 (1943), 182.

Sen. Henry Cabot Lodge revealed his unwavering opposition to the alliance as follows: "The chief and most important point in the [Four-Power] treaty is the termination of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. That was the main object of the treaty. It is sufficient to say that in my judgment the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was the most dangerous element in our relations with the Far East and with the Pacific."[4]

On the other hand, Sir Edward Grey, the former British foreign secretary, expressed appreciation for Japan's never having taken unfair advantage of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Though he did mention that the Japanese had used it to strengthen their position in China during World War I (Grey was referring to the Twenty-One Demands), he wondered whether any Western nation burdened with overpopulation, as Japan was, would have taken advantage with such self-restraint. He clearly regretted the demise of the alliance.

Unsurprisingly, the abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance pushed Japan further toward isolation from the international community. The aforementioned Thomas A. Bailey quotes a Japanese diplomat, commenting about the Four-Power Treaty that replaced the alliance, lamenting, "We have discarded whiskey and accepted water.[5]" To the Japanese, the new treaty had neither significance nor utility. From then on, they had no choice but to contend with the chaotic situation in the Far East on their own. At a time when they most needed an alliance, they had none. Japan was forced into isolation against its will. When I recollect the next 20 years, which culminated in the Greater East Asian War, years plagued with isolation and distress, I too lament the abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

Nine-Power Treaty: codification of the Open Door Policy

Third was the Nine-Power Treaty Concerning China, the conclusion of which may have been the most historically significant achievement of the Washington Conference.

It was signed by nine nations on February 6, 1922, the final day of the conference. Signatories agreed to respect the sovereignty, independence, and the territorial and administrative integrity of China. They also promised to help establish and maintain the Open Door Policy and equal opportunity for the commerce and industry of all nations (see below).

ARTICLE I[6]

The Contracting Powers, other than China, agree:

[4] Westel Woodbury Willoughby, *China at the Conference* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1922), 347.

[5] Bailey, *op. cit.*, 696.

[6] This article, composed by Elihu Root, is referred to as the "Root resolutions." Alfred Sao-ke Sze, minister plenipotentiary, a member of the Chinese delegation to the Washington Conference, submitted a list of 10 principles relating to China at a meeting of the Far Eastern Committee; Elihu Root, former US secretary of state, wrote the counterproposal.

(1) To respect the sovereignty, the independence, and the territorial and administrative integrity of China;

(2) To provide the fullest and most unembarrassed opportunity to China to develop and maintain for herself an effective and stable government;

(3) To use their influence for the purpose of effectually establishing and maintaining the principle of equal opportunity for the commerce and industry of all nations throughout the territory of China;

(4) To refrain from taking advantage of conditions in China in order to seek special rights or privileges which would abridge the rights of subjects or citizens of friendly States, and from countenancing action inimical to the security of such States.

ARTICLE III

With a view to applying more effectually the principles of the Open Door or equality of opportunity in China for the trade and industry of all nations, the Contracting Powers, other than China, agree that they will not seek any arrangement which might purport to establish in favour of their interests any general superiority of rights with respect to commercial or economic development in China … or any such monopoly or preference as would deprive the nationals of any other Power of the right of undertaking any legitimate trade or industry in China. … .

ARTICLE V

China agrees that, throughout the whole of the railways in China, she will not exercise or permit unfair discrimination of any kind. In particular there shall be no discrimination whatever, direct or indirect, in respect of charges or of facilities on the ground of the nationality of passengers or the countries from which or to which they are proceeding.

ARTICLE VII

The Contracting Powers agree that, whenever a situation arises which in the opinion of any one of them involves the application of the stipulations of the present Treaty, and renders desirable discussion of such application, there shall be full and frank communication between the Contracting Powers concerned.[7]

(I have intentionally omitted any discussion of Articles II, IV, VI, VIII, or IX.)

In the late 19th century the Open Door Policy, as championed by Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes, was little more than an aspiration. But with the Nine-Power Treaty, the US incorporated this principle of US Far Eastern policy into an international treaty, thus making it binding. Since the US had succeeded in having it recognized by all the Powers, the Nine-Power Treaty came to be called the "Chinese Magna Carta."

But since the Nine-Power Treaty effectively rejected Japan's China policy, which emphasized the special relationship between Japan and China, it constrained Japan to an excessive extent, and

[7] http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/pre-war/9_power.html.

became the primary point of contention between Japan and the US, ultimately leading up to the Greater East Asian War.

Until that war commenced the US used the treaty uninhibitedly to condemn Japan's China policy, and alleged Japanese violations of that treaty as a basis for denouncing Japan, beginning with the Manchurian Incident, through the Shanghai incidents, to the 2nd Sino-Japanese War. The Japanese tolerated such criticism until November 1938, during the 2nd Sino-Japanese War, when they formally repudiated the Open Door Policy and equal opportunity for commerce and industry, the main principles of the Nine-Power Treaty (I shall discuss this later). Then, at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (Tokyo Trials), Japan was adjudged to have violated international treaties. One of those cited was the Nine-Power Treaty. Indeed, that treaty continued to hound Japan relentlessly for a quarter century, from the Washington Conference to the postwar era.

Here I would like to add that in connection with the Nine-Power Treaty, the Lansing-Ishii Agreement was cancelled. As already stated, that agreement was reached between special envoy Ishii Kikujirō and Secretary of State Robert Lansing in 1917. The diplomatic note stated that "the governments of the United States and Japan recognize that territorial propinquity creates special relations between countries, and, consequently, the government of the United. States recognizes that Japan has special interests in China, particularly in the part to which her possessions are contiguous." However, after the Nine-Power Treaty, which demands fealty to the Open Door Policy vis à vis China, was concluded, the Lansing-Ishii Agreement was deemed to have lost its raison d'être, and was cancelled in 1923 in accordance with the wishes of the US. As the aforementioned Mr. Griswold indicated, the Lansing-Ishii Agreement was simply a "grudging concession"[8] whose intent was to appease the Japanese during the war with Germany.

In conclusion, as already stated, at the Washington Conference Japan announced the withdrawal of troops from Siberia and returned Shandong province to China, as promised, and withdrew all demands in Group V of the Twenty-One Demands.[9]

The apotheosis of US Far Eastern policy

After the Russo-Japanese War the Japan-US relationship changed. As I have already discussed, in a complete turnaround, what had been until then satisfactory ties veered toward confrontation. US Far Eastern policies, including the attempt to oust Japan from Manchuria through dollar diplomacy,

[8] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 217.

[9] Also revealed by the Chinese delegation via Charles Evans Hughes at a meeting of the Far Eastern Committee on January 24, 1922 was a secret treaty between Russia and China concluded in 1896. The reason for revealing it was to establish the fact that such a treaty would enmesh China in an international dispute, and that Japanese aggression was so severe as to necessitate a treaty between Russia and China. This gesture only served to prove that Japan had a just reason to make war with Russia. The attempt to convince world powers to place more trust in China created the opposite impression. See Komatsu Midori, *Washinton kaigi no shinsō* (The truth about the Washington Conference) (Tokyo, Chūgai Shinronsha, 1921).

and to control Japan's China policy using the guise of the Open Door Policy, had ended in failure. Even at the Paris Peace Conference, Japanese diplomacy defeated China's claims and extended Japan's sphere of influence from Manchuria and Mongolia to the equator in the distant south, acquiring for Japan the most powerful status in Asia. The opportunity to block Japan's rapid progress presented itself in the form of the Washington Conference. While that conference gave the appearance of serving as a symbol of postwar pacifism and international cooperation. In actuality, because it disregarded the current reality to a great extent, it ultimately gave rise to an unexpected contradiction.

For instance, the US had succeeded in orchestrating the demise of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which it had viewed with unease and suspicion, and replacing it with the Four-Power Treaty, thereby breaking the link between Japan and Britain. But as a result, the Japanese found themselves not only in exile, but also forced to deal with the subsequent chaos and sudden changes in the Far Eastern situation, even though they had absolutely no desire to do so.

Moreover, even a cursory examination of the Nine-Power Treaty Concerning China reveals the treaty's greatest flaw: its basis on the assumption that eventually a solid stable government would appear in China, and that China would unite and form a modern nation. That China would become even more chaotic due to the penetration of communism, and head toward violent exclusionism, did not figure in the Nine-Power-Treaty scenario. The treaty signed at the Washington Conference was premised not on the real China, but on a pie-in-the-sky China. It was impotent in the face of subsequent changes in the situation in China. Instead, it revealed the disconnection from reality and the illusions that pervaded the Washington Conference.

The system formed by the treaties concluded at the conference is referred to as the Washington Treaty System. It is interesting that in the West, the Versailles System, the objective of which is the weaking of Germany, and in the East, the Washington System, intended to constrain Japanese advancement into Asia, appeared at roughly the same time. And it is even more ironic, historically, that those systems gave rise to the Second World War, because over the course of the next 20 years Germany and Japan took it upon themselves to destroy them.

The Washington Conference is commonly thought of as the stage on which the international codification of American Far Eastern Policy took place. It was also a venue where concepts and principles took precedence. Or, if we use Griswold's words, "the Treaties of Washington were the apotheosis of the traditional Far Eastern policy of the United States."[10] Since the Washington Conference prevented further Japanese inroads into China and the Pacific, and smoothed the way for American advancement into East Asia, we can correctly conclude that it was, in essence, a political duel between Japan and the US.

[10] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 331.

CHAPTER 7: THE ILLUSION OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

1. TRAJECTORY OF US ANTI-JAPANESE ACTIONS

The Washington Naval Conference is generally perceived as symbolizing the tendency toward pacificism and international cooperation that followed the First World War. Within the context of Japan-US relations, the 10-year period between the Washington Conference and the Manchurian Incident was a time of cooperation between the two nations, exemplified by the pacifist diplomacy of Ambassador to the US Shidehara Kijūrō. However, if the 1920s had been a phase of genuine international cooperation, it is unlikely that the Manchurian Incident would have erupted 10 years after the Washington Conference.

One conspicuous manifestation of the crumbling of the spirit of international cooperation preached at the Washington Conference was the enactment of an anti-Japanese immigration law two years afterward, in 1924.

Anti-Japanese sentiment rekindled in US

Let us examine the evolution of anti-Japanese discrimination in the US after the arrangement of the Gentlemen's Agreement.

In 1913 the California State Legislature passed the California Alien Land Law, which prohibited Japanese from owning land, and limiting the period for which they could lease land to three years.

The Immigration Act of 1917 was intended to exclude all Asian immigrants. However, after repeated, vigorous objections submitted by Japan, the wording of the law was changed to remove Japan from the list of excluded nations.

During the First World War American sentiment toward the Japanese took a turn for the better, and there was hope that the California law might be mitigated to some extent. But once the war ended, anti-Japanese movements were rekindled, partly because of Japan's Racial Equality Proposal at the Paris Peace Conference. Another phenomenon that exacerbated discrimination was the so-called picture-bride problem. The exchange of photographs was a very common aspect of matchmaking used by Japanese immigrants in the US and Canada from the late 19th to early 20th century. The parents or other relatives of a young man seeking a bride would seek the services of a matchmaker, who would arrange for an exchange of photographs and biographical information. The prospective young couple would then exchange letters. If the two seemed compatible, the young woman would be added to her fiancé's census record and she would then join the young man in the US, now as his wife. This method was much simpler than having the man return to Japan to find a bride, and it was used by most young male immigrants, especially after the Gentlemen's Agreement, which prohibited new laborers from entering the US or limited their sojourns there, came into being.[1]

[1] Wakatsuki Yasuo, *Hainichi no rekishi: Amerika ni okeru Nihonjin imin* (History of discrimination against the Japanese: Japanese immigrants in the US) (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1972).

Americans looked askance at the picture-bride custom because it was so different from US practices; it became the source of increased anti-Japanese sentiment among them. It also served as fodder for the anti-Japanese discrimination mill, leading US senators like James D. Phelan and John M. Inman, both of California, to intensify their attacks on Japanese immigration.

With the greater good in mind, the Japanese government decided to outlaw picture-bride marriages, announcing that passports for travel to the US by picture brides would not be issued after March 1, 1920. However, this prohibition did not alleviate discrimination against Japanese in California. The California Alien Land Law of 1920 was a more draconian version of the 1913 law. Not only did it prevent foreigners ineligible for US citizenship from owning land, but also from leasing land for three years (which the 1913 law permitted).

Japanese deemed "ineligible to citizenship"

Between 1921 and 1925 14 states (Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana, Delaware, Idaho, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, and Washington) passed alien land laws virtually the same in intention as the California Alien Land Law. Then, on November 13, 1922, the US Supreme Court reached a unanimous judgement to the effect that Japanese were ineligible for naturalization (obtaining US citizenship). The following year, this ruling was applied to all Asians.

Introduction of anti-Japanese legislation

After World War I ended, Europe suffered a recession, which brought about a sudden increase in the number of immigrants from eastern and southern Europe seeking entry into the US. The new wave of humanity became the subject of economic, ideological, and political debate, and problems relating to immigration from Europe soon captured the public attention. The rise of Americanism, another postwar phenomenon, emphasized a pressing need for strong national unity, and provided a firm basis for a movement to limit immigration from Europe.

The aforementioned Mr. Griswold describes the situation as follows:

> Japanese immigrants were not the only foreigners affected by the xenophobia that possessed the country after the war. Jews, Catholics, and Negroes, as well as aliens suspected of communism or other "un-American" beliefs, became victims of a national witch-hunt.[2]

Worried that the European recession would give rise to a deluge of immigrants, the US Congress enacted the Emergency Quota Act in 1921. This statute limited the number of immigrants admitted

[2] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 369.

from any country annually to "3 per centum of the number of foreign-born persons of such nationality resident in the United States as determined by the US census of 1910.[3]"

Since this was a temporary statute scheduled to expire in June 1926, permanent legislation to replace it was in the offing.

Such was the political climate when, in December 1923, Rep. Albert Johnson, Republican, of Washington, submitted a bill to the House of Representatives, whereby aliens "ineligible to citizenship" would be prohibited from entering the US. At about the same time, Wesley L. Jones, Republican, also of Washington, proposed a constitutional amendment that would deprive the American-born offspring of aliens ineligible to citizenship of the right to US citizenship. Griswold tells us that "aliens ineligible to citizenship" was "legal phraseology designed to exclude the Japanese without naming them.[4]"

Johnson's bill contained some noteworthy language:

(1) The annual quota of any nationality shall be 2 percentum of the number of foreign-born individuals of such nationality resident in continental United States as determined by the United States census of 1890, but the minimum quota of any nationality shall be 100.

(2) No alien ineligible to citizenship shall be admitted to the United States unless such alien (1) is admissible as a non-quota immigrant under the provisions of subdivision (b), (d), or (e) of section 4, or (2) is the wife, or unmarried child under 18years of age, of an immigrant admissible under such subdivision (d), and is accompanying or following to join him, or (3) is not an immigrant as defined in section 3.[5]

The constitutional amendment proposed by Jones was submitted to the Senate, and then referred to the Committee on the Judiciary without delay.

The gist of the amendment follows:

> No child hereafter born in the United States of foreign parentage shall be eligible to citizenship unless both parents are eligible to become citizens of the United States; and no person heretofore born in the United States shall, from the adoption of this

[3] *Emergency Quota Act of 1921*, H.R. 4075, 67th Congress, 1st session, Chapter 8, Sec. 2 (a)., passed on 13 May 1921, effective and signed by Warren G. Harding on 19 May 1921; https://loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/67th-congress/Session%201/c67s1ch8.pdf.

[4] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 370.

[5] *Immigration Act of 1924*, H.R. 7965, 68th Congress, 1st session, Chapter 190, passed on 26 May 1924; https://loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/68th-congress/session-1/c68s1ch190.pdf; among the exceptions, listed in Sec. 4, are immigrants returning from a temporary visit abroad; immigrants who are ministers of any religious denomination, professors or other educators and their wives and children, and students.

> article, be a citizen of the United States or be eligible to become such citizen unless both parents were citizens of the United States of eligible to become such citizens.[6]

"Not expediency, but principle"

To block these two bills, both manifestly anti-Japanese in intent, Ambassador Hanihara Masanao, representing the Japanese government, conferred with Secretary of State Charles Hughes. Hanihara brought to Hughes' attention the fact that Johnson's bill contained language that contradicts the 1911 Japan-US Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, and that the constitutional amendment proposal, if ratified, would impose a particularly onerous burden on Japanese residing in the US. Then, on January 1, 1924, Foreign Minister Ijūin Hikokichi informed Ambassador Hanihara that the immigration problem was on the point of causing a major change in the tone of the Japanese intelligentsia, who had theretofore leaned toward moderation. He instructed Hanihara to confer with Hughes, and to discuss every single one of the following points with him:

(1) The anti-Japanese immigration bill contradicts the Japan-US Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, signed in 1911.
(2) Claims have been made to the effect that restrictions on immigration are applied equally to other Asians. However, judging from the fact that, within existing immigration statutes, limitations on the immigration of Asians have been imposed according to their residence in the so-called barred zone, an area defined by latitudes and longitudes, the new immigration legislation is intended specifically to discriminate against the Japanese.
(3) The discriminatory provisions in the new bill have, in an instant, destroyed policies that the Japanese government has self-sacrificingly implemented for many years by revising treaties, adhering scrupulously to the Gentlemen's Agreement.
(4) Normally, suitability to become a citizen of a particular nation should be determined on a particular individual's merits, not on that individual's race. Deciding arbitrarily that Japanese are to be classified as aliens ineligible for citizenship is a huge blow to our pride.
(5) As Japanese residing on the Pacific coast have been deemed ineligible for citizenship, they have been divested of their rights. Consequently, they have lost their livelihoods and are on the verge of poverty. The constitutional amendment proposal goes one step further. It will divest Japanese immigrants' innocent children of their public and private rights, leaving them without hope and causing their morale to plummet, and relegating them to the unenviable status of a wretched minority in the United States.
(6) Since this same constitutional amendment proposal risks provoking antipathy among the Japanese public, and negatively affecting the amicable relationship between our countries, the Imperial government feels compelled to ask the United States government to give careful consideration to this matter.[7]

---

[6] Congress.gov. "S. Con. Res. 1 – 68th Congress (1923-1924: Citizenship of Children of Foreign-Born Parents." December 6, 1923, 90; https://archive.org/details/sim_congressional-record-proceedings-and-debates_december-03-1923-january-15-1924_65/page/2/mode/2up.

[7] *Gaimushō* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), *Taibei imin mondai keika gaiyō* (Documents on Japanese foreign policy: Summary of the Course of Negotiations between Japan and the United States concerning the problems of Japanese immigration in the United States). 760-67 (Tokyo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1972).

On January 15 Ambassador Hanihara met with Secretary Hughes, advising him that the people of Japan would be paying close attention to the progress of deliberations taking place in the United States concerning the immigration law and the constitutional amendment proposal in the House of Representatives. Hanihara apprised Hughes that in the event that both should pass, Japanese public opinion would surely react adversely. The Japanese government was understandably concerned; on January 1, on the basis of instructions from the foreign minister, a memorandum was delivered to the secretary of state. An excerpt from that memorandum follows.

> It is needless to add that it is not the intention of the Japanese Government to question the sovereign right of any country to regulate immigration to its own territories. Nor is it their desire to send their nationals to the countries where they are not wanted. … To Japan the question is not one of expediency but of principle. To her the mere fact that a few hundreds or thousands of her nationals will or will not be admitted into the domains of other countries is immaterial, so long as no question of national susceptibilities is involved. The important question is whether Japan as a nation is or is not entitled to the proper respect and consideration of other nations. In other words, the Japanese Government ask of the United States Government simply that proper consideration ordinarily given by one nation to the self-respect of another, which after all forms the basis of amicable international intercourse throughout the civilized world.[8]

Secretary Hughes: Immigration Act would undo work of Washington Conference

On January 28, 1924 Representative Albert Johnson, chairman of the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, wrote Secretary of State Charles Hughes asking his opinion of the immigration legislation then under debate. Hughes penned a long reply to Johnson, dated February 8. Hughes was in favor of imposing restrictions on immigration, yes, but strongly objected to the methods proposed. In Hughes' opinion the restrictions of Johnson's bill were in conflict with the 1911 Japan-US Treaty of Commerce and Navigation. But in his eyes the real problem was one of policy, as he felt that the exclusion provision would unquestionably offend the Japanese and fail to benefit the US.

> The Japanese are a sensitive people, and unquestionably would regard such a legislative enactment as fixing a stigma upon them. I regret to be compelled to say that I believe such a legislative action would undo the work of the Washington Conference on Limitation of Armament, which so greatly improved our relations with Japan. The manifestation of American interest and generosity in providing relief to the sufferers from the recent earthquake disaster in Japan would not avail to diminish the resentment which would follow the enactment of such a measure, as this enactment would be regarded as an insult not to be palliated by any act of charity. It is useless to argue whether or not such a feeling would be justified, it is quite sufficient to say that it would exist. It has already been manifested in the discussions in Japan with respect to the pendency of this measure, and no amount of argument can avail to remove it.

[8] Letter from Hanihara Masanao to Charles Evans Hughes, *Congressional Record*, Vol. 65, Part 6, 11 April 1924, 6073-74; https://www.congress.gov/bound-congressional-record/1924/04/11/senate-section.

> The question is thus presented whether it is worth while thus to affront a friendly nation with whom we have established most cordial relations and what gain there would be from such action.[9]

Hughes adds that if the clause pertaining to aliens ineligible to citizenship were eliminated, and the quota system applicable to citizens of other nations were applied to Japanese immigrants as well, only 246 Japanese immigrants would be entitled to enter the US each year. If this system were to be adopted, together with the Gentlemen's Agreement concluded between the US and Japan, the US would be able to avail itself of effective cooperation from the Japanese authorities, as far as the issuing of passports and immigration permits is concerned. Moreover, the Japanese government would certainly cooperate in preventing Japanese from entering the US from adjacent territories. Such a double control resulting in the entry of fewer than 250 Japanese into the US per year would be much more effective than excluding all Japanese nationals. Hughes said he was well aware of the necessity of placing limitations on immigration, but hoped that a way could be found to avoid charges of discrimination against the US.[10]

US Congressmen take issue with "grave consequences"

On April 10, 1924 Ambassador Hanihara sent a letter of protest to Secretary Hughes in accordance with instructions from newly appointed Foreign Minister Matsui Keishirō. The main points covered in the letter were:

(1) Japan has "scrupulously and faithfully carried out the terms of the Gentlemen's Agreement.
(2) Japan has stopped issuing passports to picture brides as of March 1, 1920.
(3) According to statistics published by the Commissioner-General of Immigration, during the 15 years between 1908 and 1923, there was an increase of only 8,681 Japanese immigrants, for an annual average of only 578 individuals. Furthermore, their number included every type of Japanese citizen, including merchants, students, tourists, government officials.
(4) "To Japan the question is not one of expediency, but of principle. … The important question is whether Japan as a nation is or is not entitled to the proper respect and consideration of other nations.[11]

The ambassador concluded his letter as follows:

> [T]he manifest object of the [provision excluding aliens not eligible to citizenship] is to single out Japanese as a nation, stigmatizing them as unworthy and undesirable in the eyes of the American people. And yet the actual result of that particular provision, if the proposed bill becomes the law as intended, would be to exclude only 146 Japanese per year. On the other hand the Gentlemen's Agreement is, in

[9] US Department of State, Office of the Historian, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1924, Volume I: The Secretary of State to the Chairman of the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization of the House of Representative (Johnson of Washington): https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1924v01/d141.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

> fact, accomplishing all that can be accomplished by the proposed Japanese exclusion clause except for those 146. It is indeed difficult to believe that it can be the intention of the people of your great country, who always stand for high principles of justice and fair-play in the intercourse of nations, to resort — in order to secure the annual exclusion of 146 Japanese — to a measure which would not only seriously offend the just pride of a friendly nation, that has been always earnest and diligent in its efforts to preserve the friendship of your people, but would also seem to involve the question of the good faith and therefore of the honor of their Government, or at least of its executive branch.
>
> Relying upon the confidence you have been good enough to show me at all times, I have stated or rather repeated all this to you very candidly and in a most friendly spirit, for I realize, as I believe you do, the grave consequences which the enactment of the measure retaining that particular provision would inevitably bring upon the otherwise happy and mutually advantageous relations between our two countries.[12]

However, when Hanihara's letter was made public, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge (then chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee) seized upon the phrase "grave consequences" in the letter, insisting that it was a "veiled threat." Lodge stated further that the "United States can not legislate by the exercise by any other country of veiled threats." Two words had become a colossal bone of contention; in the space of just a few days the anti-Japanese Immigration Act of 1924 passed the House of Representatives, and then the Senate.[13]

On April 17 Ambassador Hanihara wrote to Hughes, explaining that he was "unable to understand how the two words, read in their context, could be construed as meaning anything like a threat."[14]

Hanihara explained, "I simply tried to emphasize the most unfortunate and deplorable effect upon our traditional friendship which might result from the adoption of a particular clause in the proposed measure. … In using these words, which I did quite ingenuously, I had no thought of being in any way disagreeable or discourteous, and still less of conveying "a veiled threat."[15]

On April 18 Hughes responded to Ambassador Hanihara, stating, "I had no doubt that these words were to be taken in the sense you have stated, and I was quite sure that it was far from your thought to express or imply any threat."[16]

---

[12] Ibid.

[13] *Congressional* Record, 68th Congress, 2nd Session, 14 April 1924, 6305; https://www.congress.gov/bound-congressional-record/1924/04/14/senate-section.

[14] *Office of the Historian: Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1924, Volume II*, "The Japanese Ambassador (Hanihara) to the Secretary of State, 17 April 1924; https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1924v02/d286.

[15] Ibid.

[16] "Immigration: Correspondence Between the Secretary of State and Ambassador Hanihara," 18 April 1924, in *International Conciliation No. 211*, June 1925, 35-36.

At around the same time Hughes wrote to Sen. Lodge to convey his deep disappointment.

> I am deeply concerned. It seems to me that an irreparable injury has been done, not to Japan but to ourselves, and, as I think, most unnecessarily, it is a dangerous thing to plant a deep feeling of resentment in the Japanese people, not that we have need to apprehend, much less to fear, war, but that we shall have hereafter in the East to count upon a sense of injury and antagonism instead of friendship and cooperation. I dislike to think what the reaping will be after the sowing of this seed. I fear that our labors to create a better feeling in the East, which have thus far been notably successful, are now largely undone.[17]

Anti-Japanese Immigration Law enacted

On May 5, 1924 House of Representatives passed the immigration bill on a vote of 308 to 58; the Senate followed suit with a vote of 69 to 9. On May 17 the legislation was forwarded to President Coolidge.

On May 26 Coolidge signed the bill.

The immigration law, which had incited controversy upon controversy, was now law. Immigration problems, which had surfaced in the 1900s, and had steadily intensified, had now arrived at a resolution of sorts. According to Griswold, "The exclusion law that the Japanese and United States Governments had tried for thirty years to avoid had at last become a fact.[18]

The official name of the anti-Japanese immigration act is Immigration Act of 1924. As mentioned earlier, it was a new law comprising 32 sections that was approved on May 26 and went into effect on July 1, 1924. It was designed to permanently replace the Emergency Quota Act if 1921 and to place additional curbs on immigration.

For instance, Section 11 (a) refers to the annual quota of any nationality (see above). The next section (b) reads as follows: "The annual quota of any nationality for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1927, and for each fiscal year thereafter, shall be a number which bears the same ratio to 150,000 as the number of inhabitants in continental United States in 1920 having that national origin (ascertained as hereinafter provided in this section) bears to the number of inhabitants in continental United States in 1920, but the minimum quota of any nationality shall be 100." According to that standard, after July 1, 1927 the quota for Japanese immigrants should have been 185 persons.

[17] Iriye Akira, After Imperialism: The Search for a New Order in the Far East 1921-1931 (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 35.

[18] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 375.

However, according to Section 13 (c), "(c) No alien ineligible to citizenship shall be admitted to the United States … ."[19] The US Supreme Court had already ruled that Japanese nationals were "not eligible to citizenship." Therefore, they were excluded from the quota system. Chinese had been barred from entering the US by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. All other Asians were excluded by the Immigration Act of 1917. Therefore, the Japanese were, beyond a shadow of a doubt, the targets of the exclusionist clause in the Immigration Act of 1924. It is little wonder that the 1924 version is referred to as the "Japanese Exclusion Act."

Japanese government issues "solemn protest"

Unfortunately, the anti-Japanese immigration act became law, despite herculean efforts on the part of the Japanese government, dating back to the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907, to maintain the status quo. On May 31, 1924 the Japanese government prepared a letter of protest, which was entrusted to Ambassador Hanihara for delivery to Secretary Hughes. An excerpt follows:

> The Japanese Government are deeply concerned by the enactment in the United States of an act entitled the "Immigration act of 1924." While the measure was under discussion in the Congress they took the earliest opportunity to invite the attention of the American Government to a discriminatory clause embodied in the act, namely, section 13 (c), which provided for the exclusion of aliens ineligible to citizenship in contradistinction to other classes of aliens, and which is manifestly intended to apply to Japanese. Neither the representations of the Japanese Government nor the recommendations of the President or of the Secretary of State were heeded by the Congress, and the clause in question has now been written into the statutes of the United States.
>
> It is, perhaps, needless to state that international discriminations in any form and on any subject, even if based on purely economic reasons, are opposed to the principles of justice and fairness upon which the friendly intercourse between nations must, in its final analysis, depend. To these very principles the doctrine of equal opportunity, now widely recognized, with the unfailing support of the United States, owes its being. Still more unwelcome are discriminations based on race.
>
> (…)
>
> Unfortunately, however, the sweeping provisions of the new act, clearly indicative of discrimination against Japanese, have made it impossible for Japan to continue the undertakings assumed under the gentlemen's agreement. An understanding of friendly cooperation reached after long and comprehensive discussions between the Japanese and American Governments has thus been abruptly overthrown by legislative action on the part of the United States. The patient, loyal and scrupulous observance by Japan for more than sixteen years of these self-denying regulations, in the interest of good relations between the two countries, now seems to have been wasted.

[19] *Congressional Record*, 68th Congress, Session I. Chs. 185, 190. 1924, 153-169; https://web.archive.org/web/20210323020221/https://loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/68th-congress/session-1/c68s1ch190.pdf.

(…)

The letter concludes as follows:

> Accordingly, the Japanese Government consider it their duty to maintain and to place on record their solemn protest against the discriminatory clause in section 13 (c) of the immigration act of 1924 and to request the American Government to take all possible and suitable measures for the removal of such discrimination.[20]

The dialogue exchanged between the Japanese and US governments, which had begun in the middle of the Meiji era, had come to an end, though far from a satisfactory one. It remained in force until after World War II, when it was replaced by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 (on June 27). The discriminatory clause had been removed and a quota (185 individuals per year) was restored to the Japanese. But until then, for a period of 28 years, Japanese immigrants were banished from the ports of the US.

Anti-American sentiment reaches boiling point

When the Immigration Act of 1924 passed both houses of Congress in mid-April of 1924, Tokyo's 15 newspapers, having concluded that the anti-Japanese statute was unjust and immoral, issued a joint protest, which was published on April 21. An excerpt follows:

> The anti-Japanese legislation recently passed by both houses of the US Congress is patently discriminatory and unjust. … We find it utterly unbearable that the friendship between Japan and the United States, which was further strengthened by the Washington Conference, and the bridge of amity built between the two opposite coasts of the Pacific on the occasion of the Great Kanto Earthquake of the preceding autumn, as well as many pleasant memories, should be destroyed by actions taken by the United States Congress. Should the legislation in question become law, we will be compelled to perceive it as the true will of the American people. Indisputably it will deeply wound the traditional friendship between the two nations, as well as bring great harm to the brilliant enterprises resulting from the cooperation of the citizens of both nations and designed to contribute to the welfare of both individuals and nations.

On April 20 a Citizens' Assembly held in Tokyo and organized by activist Uchida Ryōhei spearheaded anti-American gatherings all over Japan. More than a few resolutions agreed on at such gatherings were communicated to President Coolidge via telegraph. On April 25 another assembly for students of Nippon, Waseda, and Tōyō universities was held at the Central Buddhist Hall in Misaki-chō, Kanda, Tokyo. This one featured impassioned lectures on the anti-Japanese problem delivered by volunteer speakers, who appealed to "all patriots" to "rise up and come to the aid of their endangered compatriots."

Similar assemblies were held throughout Japan. Police officials were so concerned about the safety of American residents that they issued advisory memoranda to police stations. Furthermore, Prime

[20] Robert McElroy, "New Immigration Law over Japan's Protest" in *Current History 1924-07: Vol. 20, Issue 4*, 648-50; https://archive.org/details/sim_current-history-forum_1924-07_20_4/page/648/mode/2up.

Minister Kiyoura Keigo, Home Minister Mizuno Rentarō, other Cabinet members, and the Ministry of the Army received quite a few radical missives.

When the anti-Japanese Immigration Act was enacted on May 26, Japanese public opinion reached a boiling point; there were many gatherings held to oppose the statute. On May 31 a man in his forties, infuriated at the US, committed *seppuku*, leaving behind suicide notes, pleas urging Americans to reconsider and Japanese compatriots to rise up against injustice.

In June American Christian missionaries active in Japan began receiving threatening letters. On June 3 the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce approved a resolution condemning the new immigration law; its members announced that they would wire it to all chambers of commerce in the US.

On June 5 leading newspaper companies in Tokyo and Osaka prepared a joint declaration:

> The enactment of an anti-Japanese law is an outrage which, at essence, not only scoffs at benevolence and justice, but also dismisses the traditional friendship between Japan and the United States. The Japanese people value patience, but we shall not tolerate discriminatory treatment. As agents of Japanese public opinion, we hereby express the resolute determination of our people, and ask Americans, officials and private citizens alike, to examine their consciences.[21]

On the same day the Ryōgoku Arena was the site of an anti-American rally designed to express Japanese unity and determination in their opposition to American anti-Japanese actions; the rally drew an audience of 30,000. Those in attendance heard speeches by Tokyo University Professor Uesugi Shinkichi and activists Tōyama Mitsuru and Uchida Ryōhei.

The anti-American movement put its mark on the film industry, too. Industry representatives adopted a resolution vowing to show no American films as of July 1.

The Immigration Act went into effect on July 1, 1924. On that day a man pulled down and made off with an American flag that had been hanging high above the ruins of the US embassy.[22] However, he was soon apprehended and arrested; the flag was returned safely and rehoisted.

Historical significance of the year 1924

Nineteen twenty-four was the year when the anti-Japanese immigration law took effect, but it was also the year when War Plan Orange, a strategy intended for use during a war with Japan, took shape.

In April 1904, soon after the Russo-Japanese War commenced, a series of war plans developed jointly by the US Army and Navy, with a color assigned to each hypothetical enemy nation, was formulated. For instance, red stood for England, black for Germany, green for Mexico, and

[21] Segawa Yoshinobu, "*1924 nen Beikoku imin hō to Nichibei* gaikō" (The immigration act of 1924 and Japan-US diplomacy) in *Kokusai Seiji 26* (International politics 26), 1964.

[22] The embassy had been destroyed by a fire caused by the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923.

orange for Japan. War Plan Orange hypothesized a battle in which the US defended the Philippines against Japan. For 20 years after the US acquired the Philippines in the Spanish-American War (in 1898), Japan had no intention of attacking the Philippines. But the US, assuming it did, went steadily forward with its Pacific strategy. According to American historian William R. Braisted, the stage for War Plan Orange, which was formally adopted in August 1924, was the western Pacific Ocean (despite the fact that the naval arms race had been curtailed by the Washington Conference).[23]

An analysis of the events that transpired reveals that 1924 was a very meaningful year. The enactment of the anti-Japanese immigration act in the US filled the Japanese with sorrow and shame, and made them feel like citizens of a weak nation. Not since the Triple Intervention had they been compelled to endure such a calamity. The Washington Conference certainly restrained Japanese expansion into the Pacific and the Far East. But the consequences were even more far-reaching. The ideals touted at the conference, international friendship and cooperation, when exposed to the light of day by the anti-Japanese immigration act, turned out to be nothing more than illusions. The Japanese were justified in their suspicions that the Washington system was marred by hypocrisy. Almost involuntarily, the Japanese began to act on their deeply rooted mistrust in the Washington system of naval limitation, as well as a national desire to defeat that system. Moreover, the fact that War Plan Orange, whose target was Japan, was officially adopted, was an important event that symbolizes the historical shift in the Japan-US relationship.

Many thought that the Washington Conference heralded a new era in the Pacific, but that was an illusion that lasted for only two years. The Immigration Act of 1924, in fact, nullified the achievements of the conference, jeopardized peace in the Pacific, and caused the buds of international friendship to wither and die.[24] Shut out from the white world, Japan proceeded focus even more attention and interest on Manchuria, a new realm that would enable the Japanese to survive, even thrive, or perhaps a lifeline. The year 1924 was the crossroads between war and peace.

[23] William R. Braisted, "*Amerika kaigun to orenji sakusen keikaku*" (The US Navy and the Orange War Plan), trans. Asada Sadao, in Hosoya Chihiro and Saitō Makoto, eds., *Washinton Taisei to Nichibei kankei* (The Washington system and Japan-US relations) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1978).

[24] Segawa, *op. cit.*

CHAPTER 7* THE ILLUSION OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

2. THE COMMUNIZATION OF OUTER MONGOLIA

Soviet Russia encroaches on Outer Mongolia

Shifting our focus to the Far East, we see that the situation there bore absolutely no resemblance to international cooperation. First of all, we should establish the fact that post-revolutionary Soviet Russia, or the RSFSR (Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic), as it called itself at the time, had gained a great deal of power. After the revolution, the communist state was fast on its way to achieving its objective, i.e., becoming the largest military state in the world. Not having been a participant in the Washington Conference, nor being confined by the Nine-Power Treaty, the RSFSR was free to do as it pleased, a situation that gave rise to problems of the utmost seriousness.

When the Washington Conference began in July 1921, Soviet Russian troops invaded Outer Mongolia, ostensibly in pursuit of White Russians. The Soviets manipulated their puppet organization, the Mongolian People's Party, to form the Mongolian People's Revolutionary government. Now I will provide a brief discussion of the communization of Outer Mongolia, referring mainly to Gotō Tomio's *A Political History of Mongolia*.

Mongolia's communist government asked that Moscow not withdraw Soviet troops from Mongolian territory until the threat from their common enemy vanished. Unsurprisingly, the Soviet Union gladly acceded to this request. In place of the Soviet partisans then stationed in Kulun (now Ulaanbaatar), the RSFSR dispatched a regular army unit, the 308th Regiment, to Outer Mongolia.

A great many powerless Russians who had absolutely no connection with Russian domestic strife fell victim to the RSFSR's campaign to free Mongolia from capitalist control. Although the majority of White Russian troops escaped to Manchuria with their lives, a great many innocent Russian civilians who had emigrated to Mongolia before World War I, or fled there to escape the chaos in Russia, met horrible fates. The Red Mongol Army perpetrated horrifically cruel acts on those defenseless people. They looted and plundered, and pitilessly massacred any and every human being they encountered — men and women, young and old, even children and infants. With the exception of the very few who managed to escape, every single resident of the Russian colony in Uliastai was murdered. Like the massacre in Nikolayevsk in 1920, that assault was not spur of the moment. Though it may have seemed spontaneous or even justifiably vengeful, it was the result of careful planning.[1]

The fate of Tannu Uriankhai

Uriankhai (also known as Tannu Uriankhai) is situated in a remote region of western Mongolia. It is here that the headwaters of the Yenisey River arise. Uriankhai lies between 50° and 53° north

[1] Gotō Tomio, *Mōko seiji shi* (A political history of Mongolia) (Tokyo: Takayama Shoin, 1938).

latitude, and 89° and 100° east longitude. It is surrounded in the north by the Sayan mountains, in the south by the Tannu-Ola mountains, and in the east by extensions of these mountain ranges. Because it is surrounded by steep mountains, Uriankhai is virtually inaccessible. In area it measures 170,000 square kilometers, making it the size of Portugal, Switzerland, and Belgium combined. Uriankhai abounds in resources: it has many gold mines, as well as rich deposits of other minerals, such as platinum, uranium, copper, iron, and coal. The soil is fertile; picturesque pastures abound. Forests, which occupy 25% of the country's area, yield valuable timber. The inhabitants are Turkic and closely resemble the Kyrgyz. The population was nearly 60,000 in 1925.

For a long time this region was *terra nullius* (territory that belongs to no state). Even in the Treaty of Kyakhta, concluded in 1727, the borders of Uriankhai with Russia and China remained vague. The Sayans were designated as the southern border of Russia, and the southern slopes of the Tannu-Ola as the border with China. Accordingly, Uriankhai was under the sway of neither Russia nor China. Some historians are of the opinion that neither Russian nor Chinese authorities were aware even of the existence of Uriankhai, and believed that the Sayans and the Tannu-Olas were one and the same.

Russia set out to possess Uriankhai at the beginning of the 20th century, during the reign of its last emperor, Nicholas II. In the autumn of 1914, when World War I commenced, Russia issued a declaration to the inhabitants of Uriankhai to the effect that Uriankhai was now a Russian protectorate. During the European war, both China and Mongolia registered several protests, but they were ineffectual. When the Russian revolution erupted, Bolshevik forces wasted no time in making an appearance in Uriankhai. In August 1921 Soviet troops arrived and created the Tuvan People's Republic.

Two years later, in August 1923, the Tuvan People's Republic was renamed Tannu Tuvan People's Republic, real control of which was in the hands of the Soviet government and the Comintern. The Tannu Tuva People's Republic was the first Soviet satellite state.

What lay in store for Uriankhai? In June 1941, when war broke out between Germany and the Soviet Union, the Tuvan puppet government convened a Soviet-style parliament called a Khural, which proceeded to declare war on Germany. On August 17, 1944 the Soviet government petitioned (or more accurately, commanded) the Tuvan government to merge with the USSR. In October 13 of the same year Tuva acknowledged its status as an autonomous soviet socialist republic. Thus Tannu Tuva was absorbed into the massive belly that was the USSR and disappeared, its life as a nation having come to an end. Forcing a puppet government to "petition" for inclusion in the Soviet Union and having the Supreme Soviet shamelessly "acknowledging" the "petition" is the exact same blatantly transparent method used by the USSR when it occupied and absorbed the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania). An examination of a map of Asia reveals that part of the former Outer Mongolia, i.e., the region north of 50° north latitude and between 89° and 100° east longitude had been completely obliterated, as had the Tuvan People's Republic and Tannu Uriankhai. The only trace of them on the map is Tuvinskaya Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

Why the Soviets seized Outer Mongolia

Let us return to the topic of Outer Mongolia.

On November 5, 1921 the RSFSR and Outer Mongolia concluded the Agreement Between the Mongolian People's Government and the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic Regarding the Establishment of Friendly Relations. According to that agreement, "[t]he People's Government of Mongolia declares that it recognises in respect of Russian citizens possessing in Mongolia plots of land or buildings the same rights of possession, lease and occupation of building plots, and that it will apply the same methods of exacting taxation, rents and other payments in the same proportions as are recognised or applied, or shall be recognised and applied, in respect of the citizens of the most favoured State."[2]

The Mongolians were granting the exact same privileges to the RSFSR as they had to Imperial Russia. The November 5 agreement was kept secret for a time. When it was made public in the spring of 1922, the Chinese Foreign Ministry sent a protest to the Soviets, which maintained that the Soviet government had broken the promises made to the Chinese government in a manifesto issued by Deputy Foreign Commissar Lev Karakhan, i.e., that "all previous treaties made between the Russian Government and China shall be null and void, that the Soviet Government will unconditionally and forever return what has been forcibly seized from China by the former Imperial Russian Government and the Bourgeoisie.

"Now the Soviet Government has suddenly gone back on its own words and secretly and without any right concluded a treaty with Mongolia. Such action on the part of the Soviet Government is similar to the policy the former Imperial Russian Government assumed toward China," adding that Mongolia "is a part of Chinese territory."[3]

The Chinese continued to assert that Mongolia was part of China, but the response from the RSFSR was, invariably, that the citizens of Mongolia had appealed to the Soviets to send Russian troops to defend Mongolian freedom. The Soviets insisted that Mongolia could not maintain its independence without the help of the RSFSR, and that the whole world knew that without that help, Mongolia would end up as the prey of a neighboring nation. They justified their continued occupation of Mongolia with their usual argument: "We are responding to an earnest request from Mongolia."

Along this same vein, another argument the Soviets used, so typical of them, was, "We are occupying Mongolia for Mongolia's sake." This is a foreshadowing of the excuse the Soviets used in August 1945 when they unilaterally scrapped the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact and proceeded to encroach on Japan.

> The Soviet Government considers that this policy is the only means able to bring peace nearer, free the people from further sacrifice and suffering and give the

[2] Jane Degras, ed., *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy (Volume 1, 1917-1924)* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), 484-487; https://archive.org/details/sovietdocumentso0000jane/page/486/mode/2up?q=484.

[3] Alfred L.P. Dennis, *The Foreign Policies of Soviet Russia* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1924), 324; https://archive.org/details/foreignpolicieso006529mbp/page/336/mode/2up?q=%22unconditionally+and+forever+return%22.

> Japanese people the possibility of avoiding the dangers and destruction suffered by Germany after her refusal to capitulate unconditionally.[4]

We must never allow ourselves to forget what the Soviets did later in Manchuria and Sakhalin. Did they free the Japanese there from "further sacrifice and suffering" and help them avoid danger and destruction? Far from it! They inflicted unspeakable violence and cruelty on them.

Before long the Soviets (now the USSR) promulgated a Soviet-style Constitution on behalf of its puppet Mongolian government and established the Mongolian People's Republic, which became the second satellite state of the Soviet Union in November 1924. That was a sign that China's suzerainty over Mongolia was now only a formality. The Constitution of the Republic of China stated that Inner and Outer Mongolia were part of the "territory of the Chinese Republic,"[5] but these were empty words. For all intents and purposes, Outer Mongolia would follow the trajectory of a closed communist country under the thumb of the Soviet Union.

Setting the stage for the Manchurian Incident

Japan's Siberian Expedition was practically coincidental with Soviet intrusion into Outer Mongolia and Tannu Uriankhai. Though the objective of Japan's mission in sending troops to Siberia was to prevent the infiltration of communist forces into the Far East, the US viewed it with a jaundiced eye, and Japan soon became the target of international criticism. The Americans failed to comprehend the terrible significance of the invasion and communization of Outer Mongolia and Tannu Uriankhai. They uttered not one word of criticism against the Soviets; to make matters worse, they did not even attempt to check the Soviet menace. And what was the outcome? The communization of Outer Mongolia, which set the stage for the communization of China. Moreover, it facilitated the penetration of communism into Manchuria. The assertion that the Soviet usurpation and communization of Outer Mongolia accelerated the threat of communism in the Far East, and set the stage for the Manchurian Incident, which erupted 10 years later, is in no way an overstatement.

Soviet encroachment on Outer Mongolia and Uriankhai was clearly a violation of the Karakhan Manifestos issued in 1919 and 1920, and a blatant betrayal. I have already mentioned the Chinese protest. The Soviet Union invasion of Outer Mongolia and the Uriankhai region the year after the second manifesto was issued came as a surprise. Furthermore, the period during which the Soviet Union tightened its grip on Outer Mongolia and Uriankhai is exactly contemporaneous with the one during which the Soviet Union was pressuring the Chinese Nationalist Party to align itself with the communists. In the history of the Far East, there had heretofore been no display of outrageous, shameless behavior the likes of this one.

---

[4] "Soviet Declaration of War on Japan," The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy https://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/s4.asp.

[5] M. Joshua Bau, *Modern Democracy in China* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1924), 394; https://archive.org/details/moderndemocracyi0000baum/page/n19/mode/2up?q=%22provisional+constitution%22.

Impotence of the Washington Conference

Actions taken by the Soviet Union, as described above, were attempts to challenge the ethos of the Washington Conference. Consider the Nine-Power Treaty that emerged from the conference. In Section (3) of Article I, the Contracting Powers, other than China, agree "to use their influence for the purpose of effectually establishing and maintaining the principle of equal opportunity for the commerce and industry of all nations throughout the territory of China."[6] In Section (4) they agree "to refrain from taking advantage of conditions in China in order to seek special rights or privileges which would abridge the rights of subjects or citizens of friendly States, and from countenancing action inimical to the security of such States."[7]

The Soviets, however, did not participate in the Washington Conference. It is true that Outer Mongolia and China are not one and the same. But the RSFSR, seizing upon the opportunity provided by the chaos that prevailed in the early 1920s, infiltrated Outer Mongolia and Uriankhai, communized the region, and closed it off to all other states. It seemed as though by doing so, the Soviets were not only contradicting the international objectives and ideals symbolized by the Washington Conference, but also willfully and deliberately challenging them.

The US and the other participants in the Washington Conference made prodigious (and successful) efforts to deprive Japan of its special interests in China and Manchuria, and to discourage Japanese advancements into China. On the other hand, those same nations worried not a bit about Soviet government encroachment on Outer Mongolia and Uriankhai, and what is more, did not lift a finger to stop them. Consider the serious effects their inaction had on Far Eastern history in later years. The documents signed at the Washington Conference are characterized by the complete absence of a force that would guarantee stability in Asia.

When we contemplate subsequent events, such as the Manchurian Incident and the 2nd Sino-Japanese War, we must not forget that preceding them by more than 10 years, was the usurpation of Outer Mongolia, which is contiguous with Manchuria and North China, by the Soviets. They now had a frontline base for their campaign to communize Asia.

Arms reduction, the Open Door Policy, and international cooperation represented the ideals and spirit of the Washington Conference. The Soviets ignored them all and set about trampling on them. Japan, and only Japan, had the insight to awaken to the seriousness of the situation, and to foresee its horrific outcome.

[6] Treaty Between the United States of America, Belgium, the British Empire, China, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, and Portugal, Signed at Washington February 6, 1922, The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/tr22-01.asp.

[7] Ibid.

CHAPTER 7 THE ILLUSION OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

3. LAWLESSNESS AND VIOLENCE IN THE "REAL" CHINA

Three competing governments

At the Washington Conference the signatories to the Nine-Power Treaty agreed to "respect the sovereignty, the independence, and the territorial and administrative integrity of China," as well as the "principles of the Open Door." Needless to say, the main purpose of the treaty was to discourage Japanese advancement into Manchuria, Mongolia, and China.[1] The US, the host nation of the Washington Conference, had embraced an extremely optimistic presumption, i.e., if constraints were placed on Japanese activity there, China would suddenly transform itself into a modern sovereign nation. But post-Washington-Conference China, the "real" China, tore that rose-colored forecast to shreds. The US was visualizing the ideal China, not the real China. The Washington Conference moved forward on the basis of that delusion, and established the Washington system. The Japanese were far less optimistic — they saw China for what it was. Unfortunately, Japan was overpowered by the idealistic Americans' diplomacy. What was the political situation in China after the Washington Conference? It was chaotic and disunified, due to (1) strife among warlords' militias, and (2) the communist movement.

Soviet overtures to China began with Lev Karakhan's manifestos (issued in 1919 and 1920). Ten years had passed since the 1911 (Xinhai) Revolution, but China remained disunified. Conflicts among warlords raged, and the May Fourth Movement (1919), had ignited the bitter flames of nationalism. This state of affairs made China the perfect breeding ground for communism. And inevitably, the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) was founded in July 1921.

Meanwhile, the warlords were battling fiercely. In April 1922 the 1st Zhili-Fengtian War was fought. Wu Peifu of the Jilin militia defeated Zhang Zuolin of the Fengtian militia; Zhang fled to Manchuria. But in May, the undaunted Zhang issued a declaration of independence in connection with the three eastern provinces that comprise Manchuria: Fengtian, Jilin, and Heilongjiang. At this point China had three governments (one in Beijing, another in Guandong, and a third in Fengtian). Less than three months after the Nine-Power Treaty was signed in Washington, China had unraveled into three regimes. The "ideal China" that the Washington Conference had envisioned proved to be a delusion, one of China's own making. Since, at that time, there was no other nation with three governments, we must conclude that China did not qualify as a nation.

Regular Chinese soldiers indistinguishable from bandits

Local rebels' frequent acts of violence against foreigners illustrate the barbarous nature of China at the time. I shall describe one of them, referred to in the Western world as the Lincheng Outrage.

In May 1923, near Lincheng on the Tianjin-Pukou Railway in Shandong province, a horde of bandits attacked an express train bound for Tianjin from Pukou. The bandits took as hostages

[1] *Ibid.*

more than 20 citizens of the UK, the US, France, Italy, Denmark, and Mexico, whose numbers included women and children, thereby temporarily capturing the world's attention. The hostages were confined to a mountain fortress used by the bandits. The bandits demanded that their contingent be reorganized into a regular army unit. The Chinese government responded by assigning military status to more than 2,000 bandits who possessed guns and organizing them into a brigade headed by a bandit chief. After the government promised the remaining bandits that they would be given travel money and exempted from punishment, the hostages were released.

This was a shocking incident, especially to foreign residents of China. They were pessimistic about China's future, some even proposed scrapping the Nine-Power Treaty as it applied to China. There were debates among foreign diplomats stationed in Beijing suggested that there be joint policing of China by the world's powers. Japan, however, was strongly opposed to international supervision of China and lobbied against it, fearing that such an arrangement might result in the partitioning of that nation. But the Japanese lack of reverence for the spirit of the Washington Conference, as demonstrated during the resolution of the Lincheng Outrage, seemed to cause the other powers to view Japan with distrust.[2]

Reorganizing bandits into regular army units is an astonishing concept, but the bandits did have a prescribed military training program. Moreover, they had a command hierarchy and were in possession of a great number of weapons. Therefore, it was less expensive to "purchase" groups of bandits than to undergo the not insignificant expense of purchasing weapons and training regular soldiers. However, yesterday's bandits may have been transformed into today's regular soldiers, but that does not mean that they forsook their customary criminal activities and became upstanding citizens. Once a bandit, always a bandit. Furthermore, in China, where there was no conscription system in place, it was customary to hire coolies when the need arose to recruit soldiers, given the salary and other benefits (or lack thereof) offered. Young men from good families simply did not serve in the military. Consequently, there was little distinguishable difference between bandits and regular soldiers, as far as character and behavior were concerned. That is why in China one of the perquisites of being regular soldiers in wartime of war was the opportunity to plunder areas they were stationed in or passed through. In peacetime, when pay tended to be insufficient, such behavior was generally tolerated. Bandit-soldiers commonly engaged in their customary practice of looting, but they also attacked and even slaughtered defenseless people wherever they went. They also solicited "contributions" from local chambers of commerce or similar organizations when they withdrew from a locale. They were often exempted from punishment when they looted, and it was not unusual for them to collect huge amounts of money as a reward for leaving an area.[3]

---

[2]Gaimushō gaikō shiryōkan (Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), ed., "*Rinjō jiken*" (Lincheng outrage) in *Nihon gaikō shi jiten* (A lexicon of Japanese diplomatic history) (Tokyo: Ōkurashō insatsukyoku (Printing Bureau, Ministry of Finance), 1979.

[3] Kijima gaikō kenkyūshitsu (Kijima diplomatic research institute), ed., *Haigai Shina no kaibo* (Anatomy of xenophobic China) (Tokyo: Kokusai Keizai Kenkyūjo, 1937).

The Chinese aphorism "Good iron is not used to make nails, and good men do not become soldiers" aptly illustrates the abysmally inferior quality of Chinese soldiers. We must remember that the poor performance of Chinese units due to lack of leadership and their tendencies toward plundering, violence, and slaughter was, in large part, the cause of most of the conflicts between China and other nations. Therefore, the challenge of finding effective ways to contend with Chinese troops, and to protect foreign residents from their acts of violence was a huge cause of concern to the Japanese government. It was also the reason for dissimilarities in domestic opinion, as well as the difference between the China policy of Japan and that of the other powers.

Manchuria's *de facto* independence

In 1924 the GMD (Chinese Nationalist Party) decided to join with the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) to form the First United Front. The CCP immediately got to work, making full use of the name, and at the same time launching a concerted effort to splinter the GMD's internal workings and ultimately topple the party.

In that same year, diplomatic relations were established between the USSR and China. On May 31, 1924 two treaties between the two nations were signed: (1) The Sino-Soviet Agreement on General Principles for the Settlement of the Questions Between the Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and (2) Agreement for the Provisional Management of the Chinese Eastern Railway. The first pertained to the establishment of diplomatic relations, and the second, to joint operation of the railroad.

However, what we need to be mindful of is that, on September 20 of the same year, Zhang Zuolin's Fengtian government concluded an identical agreement with the Soviets pertaining to operation of the Chinese Eastern Railway. What are we to make of this? The Lytton Report, which evaluated the Manchurian Incident (1931) for the League of Nations, offers the following:

> In July 1922, when [Zhang Zuolin] failed to establish his authority south of the Great Wall and saw his rivals taking control of the Peking Government, he renounced allegiance to the Central Government and maintained complete independence of action in Manchuria until he extended his authority south of the Wall and became master of Peking as well. He expressed his willingness to respect foreign rights, and accepted the obligations of China, but he requested foreign Powers to negotiate henceforth directly with his administration in all matters concerning Manchuria.
>
> Accordingly, he repudiated the Sino-Soviet Agreement of May 31st, 1924, though very advantageous to China, and persuaded the U.S.S.R. to conclude a separate agreement with him in September 1924. It was virtually identical with that of May 31st, 1924, with the Central Government. This fact emphasized Chang Tso-lin's [Zhang Zuolin's] insistence on the recognition of his complete independence of action, both in domestic and foreign policy.[4]

[4] Commission of Enquiry, Earl of Lytton, *Situation in Manchuria: Report of the Lytton Commission of Inquiry* (Geneva: League of Nations Publications, 1932), 28;

The fact that Zhang Zuolin's Fengtian government signed an agreement exactly the same as that signed between China and the USSR tells us that Zhang was stating, in no uncertain terms, that the three eastern provinces (Manchuria) were independent of China. It also tells us that the USSR recognized Manchuria as an autonomous region controlled by the Fengtian government and independent of the Chinese Central Government. Zhang Zuolin, who in the preceding year, had issued a declaration of independence for Manchuria, in 1924 was now making that same assertion via diplomatic means.

The Chinese maintained that the three eastern provinces (Manchuria) were Chinese territory, and later complained of Japanese aggression when Manzhouguo was founded. But the truth is that the two aforementioned agreements prove that, as early as 1923-24, Manchuria was already an autonomous region *not* under the control of the Chinese Central Government. If Manchuria was indeed part of China, then the objectives of the Nine-Power Treaty and the Washington Conference, both of which had sworn "to respect the sovereignty, the independence, and the territorial and administrative integrity of China," were proven to be illusions.

Japan supports tariff autonomy for China

One of the agreements concluded at the Washington Conference was the Treaty Between the Nine Powers Concerning the Chinese Customs Tariff. That agreement called for the holding of the Special Conference on the Chinese Customs Tariff, which commenced on October 26, 1925 in Beijing. Thirteen nations participated: Japan, the UK, the US, France, Belgium, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and China. The treaty stated that the primary objective of the Special Conference was to agree upon matters relating to the revision of the Chinese customs tariff, with a view toward increasing the annual revenue of the Chinese government.

The Chinese delegation, intoxicated by nationalistic fervor, was scheming to restore tariff autonomy in one fell swoop at this conference. But neither the UK (nor the US, which had in principle supported Chinese demands for the restoration of Chinese national sovereignty at the Paris Peace Conference and the Washington Conference) had any intention of agreeing immediately to the new Chinese demands. The UK delegation stated that they were opposed to the Western powers' addressing this topic until China had quelled internecine warfare, demonstrated that it was capable of protecting the lives and property of foreign residents, and had succeeded in functioning like a unified, independent nation. The US (and the UK) stated that the minimum requirement for Chinese tariff autonomy was the elimination of the *lijin*, an interprovincial tariff.

The Japanese, on the other hand, approached the conference with a plan that agreed with the desires of the Chinese for tariff autonomy. At the opening ceremony, Hioki Eki, the head of the Japanese delegation and minister plenipotentiary, delivered a speech that supported Chinese demands, no doubt at the behest of Foreign Minister Shidehara,.

Hioki began his speech by referring to events that occurred after Japan opened itself up to the world, an era during which Japan did not enjoy tariff autonomy.

> The Japanese people, dissatisfied as they were with such arrangements,[5] were sensible of their own shortcomings. They perceived that the weakness of their international position was but a result of their internal weakness. They saw the futility of all attempts to remove the effect without removing its cause. In this conviction they set to work silently, steadily, resolutely, with their eyes fixed upon the completion of all reforms needed in their domestic administration.
>
> (…)
>
> China is still following the same path that we once pursued. The difficulties, the embarrassments and the perplexities that confront China to-day have once been ours. The Japanese Delegation will approach the problems before this Conference with sympathy and understanding and with intimate apprehension of the Chinese position. I am happy to state at the outset that the Japanese Delegation are fully prepared to consider in the friendliest way the question of tariff autonomy which appears in the agenda presented by the Chinese Delegation.[6]

When the speech ended, the head of the Chinese delegation conveyed his appreciation to Hioki.

At the Washington Conference, a surtax had already been agreed upon, i.e., 2.5% on ordinary goods, and 5% on luxury goods. However, at the Special Conference, the Chinese delegation, dissatisfied with such a low rate, demanded a much higher surtax. Their demand precipitated a difference of opinion between China and Japan, which was unwilling to accept anything other than the Washington surtax rate.

Since at that time it seemed that there was no end in sight to internecine strife, fueled by battles between warlord militias, the participating delegations began to feel reluctant about immediate implementation of an import surtax; the conference seemed about to dissolve any number of times. Then, in April 1926, the government led by Duan Qirui collapsed because of a coup d'état, and Beijing was plunged into anarchy. On July 3 the conference was postponed until such time as a legitimate government was established in China.

Lack of faith in China causes Washington-Conference spirit to founder

Judging from the situation prevailing in China when the Special Conference on the Chinese Customs Tariff was taking place, not to mention the discrepancies among participating nations as far as China policy was concerned, the spirit of the Washington Conference seemed to have foundered in the short space of three years.

Even the Americans were quite pessimistic about China, concluding that it had in fact descended into anarchy. For instance, after touring South China, Ferdinand L. Mayer, counselor at the American Legation in Beijing, recommended that the "US cease to cherish the myth of China's

[5] Hioki was referring to extraterritoriality and a disadvantageous customs tariff.

[6] "Tariff Conference Opened with Great Ceremony," *The North-China Herald*, 31 October 1925.

territorial and administrative integrity and deal individually with the various 'semi-autonomous regions' into which the country was divided."[7]

Also, back in the US, Washington government officials were now gloomy about China's future. Nelson Johnson, head of the State Department's Far Eastern Division, wrote the following in a personal letter: "History … will record that Chinese would-be nationalists did what the United States tried to prevent, namely, divided China. One looks in vain for Jeffersons and Franklins capable and unselfish enough to bring these people together."[8]

Other nations' wariness of China can also be perceived from the conclusions arrived at by the Commission on Extraterritoriality in China, which met at about the same time as the Special Conference on the Chinese Customs Tariff. Participating nations were in agreement that it would not make sense to put an end to extraterritoriality, at least not right away. According to a report issued by the Commission in September 1926, China would first have to establish "a unified system of laws, judicial independence from military authorities and executive branches of government, and extension of the system of modern courts, prisons, and detention houses."[9]

I believe I have demonstrated that, a mere four years after the Washington Conference, the world's faith in China as a nation was plummeting rapidly. The spirit and ideals of that conference had clearly disintegrated. Japan took the initiative in supporting China's demands for tariff autonomy at the Special Conference on the Chinese Customs Tariff. That gesture changed Chinese sentiment toward Japan for the better, at least temporarily. Furthermore, the decision to support China in its quest for tariff autonomy certainly served as a stepping stone to the signing of the Treaty Regulating Tariff Relations Between the US and China on July 25, 1928, as well as subsequent similar agreements with other nations. It was typical of what was referred to at the time as "Shidehara diplomacy."

Unfortunately, Japan's diplomatic efforts on behalf of China elicited no corresponding repayment. In 1927, the year following the Special Conference on the Chinese Customs Tariff, instead of thanks, what a now red China offered to Japan were violent, hateful campaigns like the Nanjing and Hankou incidents.

[7] Iriye Akira, *After Imperialism: The Search for a New Order in the Far East* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), 83.

[8] *Ibid.*, 84.

[9] *Ibid.*, 87.

CHAPTER 8: REVOLUTIONARY CHINA AND COMMUNISM

1. COMMUNISM SINKS ITS FANGS INTO A CHINA IN TURMOIL

Sun Yat-sen and the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance

Sun Yat-sen is often described as the founding father of modern China. In 1894, when Sun was 28 and living in Hawaii, he harbored hopes of overthrowing the Qing dynasty and ridding China of foreign influences. To that end he established the Revive China Society, a secret organization. In the following year, when China was defeated in the 1st Sino-Japanese War, Sun felt that his country was ripe for revolution. He laid plans for an uprising in Guangzhou; when they ended in failure, he sought refuge in Japan.

The defeat of Qing China in the war was a turning point for Chinese intellectuals, as it forced them to do some soul-searching. They asked themselves why the Japanese were so strong, eventually arriving at the painful realization that the Japanese victory could be traced to modernization achieved through the Meiji Renovation. The Self-Strengthening Movement, devised to modernize China, was informed by the example set by the Japanese. The movement's activities gained influence throughout China after the war with Japan. At the center of this revolutionary tide was the Society for Preserving China (Baoguohui), at the helm of which were reformers Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao. A revolutionary movement modeled after the Meiji Renovation under the auspices of Emperor Guangxu arose on June 11, 1898. However, due to the coup d'état mounted by Dowager Empress Cixi, the emperor's efforts ended in failure on September 21 after only 100 days (the Hundred Days' Reform). Kang and Liang fled to Japan.

When the Boxer Rebellion erupted in 1900, Sun Yat-sen launched his second insurrection, the Huizhou Uprising. But that too failed because of poor planning and an insufficiency of weapons. Afterwards, Sun returned to Japan, but soon headed to Europe and the US. In July 1905, when it was clear that Japan would win the Russo-Japanese War, he went back to Japan. There he succeeded in consolidating the Revive China Society and two other revolutionary organizations. On August 20, 1905 the Tongmenghui (Chinese Revolutionary Alliance) was established at a gathering in Akasaka, Tokyo. There, several hundred Chinese students (out of a total of 8,000 studying in Japan at the time) hailing from 17 Chinese provinces (only Gansu province was not represented), attended the meeting. Sun Yat-sen was chosen to head the Tongmenghui, with Huang Xing as his deputy. At that time the organization adopted Sun's Three Principles of the People.

All subsequent uprisings coordinated by the Tongmenghui foundered. The Xinhai Revolution began in 1911 with unrest in Sichuan province stemming from an attempt to nationalize China's railroads, followed by an uprising of the revolutionary troops in Wuchang, Hubei province, on October 10. Inspired by the slogan "Destroy the Manchus, Revive the Han," those incidents accelerated the spread of revolutionary fervor through all of China until, within a month's time, more than 10 provinces had declared their independence from the Qing regime.

Chaos after Xinhai Revolution

Qing court officials appealed to Yuan Shikai, then in exile in Henan, to restore order. After observing the situation for some time, Yuan traveled to Beijing and formed a cabinet. With an abundance of financial and military strength, he took control of Beijing. Meanwhile, news of the success of the Wuchang Uprising had reached the ears of Sun Yat-sen, then in the US. Sun returned to China through Europe, arriving at the end of December. On New Year's Day in 1912, he assumed the office of provisional president of China in Nanjing. He also declared that January 1, 1912 would mark the establishment of the Republic of China. Not long thereafter, as a result of direct negotiations between Sun and Yuan, the two arrived at a joint decision. Yuan, having agreed that China should now become a republic, would arrange for the abdication of the Qing emperor. In return, Sun would yield the presidency to Yuan, and ensure that preferential treatment be given to the imperial household. As a result of this compromise, Pu Yi, the l2th Qing emperor, who was seven years old at the time, abdicated on February 12. The Qing dynasty, founded as the Jin dynasty in 1616 by Emperor Nurhaci, after a reign lasting 296 years (or 268 years after being renamed the Qing dynasty), had met its end.

Provisional President Yuan Shikai, officiating in Beijing, formed a cabinet and moved the center of government from Nanjing to Beijing. The revolutionaries, led by Song Jiaoren, established the Nationalist Party (GMD) and girded themselves for a parliamentary battle against Yuan. In February 1913 the GMD achieved an overwhelming victory in a general election. But Yuan, making use of his militias, took action to suppress the GMD, his first step being to have Song Jiaoren, its de facto leader, assassinated in April. The first parliamentary session was convened that same month, but Yuan took it upon himself to borrow the huge amount of £25 million from the five-nation China Consortium without first obtaining Parliament's approval. Now there was enmity between Yuan and Parliament, and Yuan began using his military strength to destroy the GMD. The GMD raised an army in southern China against Yuan (the Second Revolution), but it was too weak to prevail. Sun and Kang fled to Japan, and fellow revolutionary Wang Jingwei to France. The GMD was thrown into disarray, and many of its members decamped to Japan, where they regrouped. In July 1914 Sun Yat-sen established the Chinese Revolutionary Party, and launched another campaign to combat Yuan.

By 1915 it was obvious that Yuan was now scheming to form an imperial government with himself as emperor. The revolutionaries again raised an army to combat Yuan in Yunnan, and its momentum soon swept China south of the Yangzi River (the Third Revolution). Even power-hungry Yuan was forced to announce the postponement of his ascension to the imperial throne. In June 1916 his turbulent life ended in agony.

Still, the situation in Beijing did not improve one iota, even after Yuan's death. National law and Parliament might as well not have existed. In July 1917 Gen. Zhang Xun, a monarchist, embarked on a campaign to restore the Qing dynasty, but the drama ended after only 12 days. Such was the political climate when Sun Yat-sen and other revolutionaries gathered in Guangdong. In August 1917 an extraordinary session of Parliament was held, at which a military government was approved and Sun was elected grand marshal. The First Guangdong government, operating under the banner "Protect the Constitution," had been established.

At this point China was clearly split in half with two governments, one in the north and one in the south. But foreign powers continued to keep their diplomatic agencies in Beijing, and did not recognize the southern government. Moreover, the southern government, like its Beijing counterpart, was plagued by covert conflicts between warlords and factions. Such was the Republic of China after the Xinhai Revolution. It was so different from Japan, where sovereign power under Emperor Meiji had been restored, and a modern nation had been built, replacing a feudal system that had endured for 300 years. But in China, *revolution* was just an empty word. Because the "new" China, where chaos reigned and private battles between warlords raged, was a breeding ground for subversion, it would soon become the ideal cradle of communism.

Establishment of Comintern

The bizarre nature of the Soviet government that emerged in the wake of the Russian Revolution was revealed by its primary mission, i.e., the spread of communism through the destruction of other nations' governments. This is the main reason why Japan and other nations viewed Soviet Russia as a threat. The revolution first spread to Germany. One month after the Armistice of 11 November 1918 was signed, the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) was formed from the Spartacus Group, a left-wing organization. In January 1919 the group staged an uprising, but the communist revolution plan was stymied when its leaders, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, were murdered.

However, the year 1918 saw communist parties form in many nations. In March 1919 a founding congress, held in Moscow, was attended by communist party members and left-wing socialists from nations all over the world. It was there that the Communist International (usually shortened to Comintern), also known as the Third International, was established, in accordance with a proposal from Lenin and the Bolsheviks. It was Lenin's intention to create a worldwide revolutionary organization under Bolshevik leadership whose members would form identical groups using the same strategy and tactics the world over. In forming the Comintern, Lenin was creating an organization identical to the Bolshevik Party (later known by other names, but in essence the Communist Party of the Soviet Union), and operating under the same platform, which was adopted at the Second World Congress in July 1920.

In order to join the Comintern, each nation's communist party was required to embrace the party platform, which comprised 21 conditions. Particularly noteworthy is the mention of two indispensable essentials: "propaganda and agitation" and the "dictatorship of the proletariat" (Condition 1). Also required was the removal from all responsible positions of "reformists and 'Centrists,'" in other words, anyone opposed to communist strategy and tactics (Condition 2). Additional requirements were combining "legal and illegal work" if legal work alone does not enable communists to accomplish their objectives when preparing for civil war (Condition 3), "persistent and systematic propaganda and agitation in the armed forces" (Condition 4), and "regular and systematic agitation" in the countryside (Condition 5).[1]

[1] V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works: Volume 31 (April-December 1920)* ed. Julius Katzer (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1920), 207-08; https://archive.org/details/dli.bengal.10689.16156/page/n5/mode/2up.

Once created, the Comintern was formally an international organization to which communist parties of member nations belonged. But total control was in actuality in the hands of the Soviet Communist Party, which considered each nation's communist party as a subdivision of itself through the Comintern. As evidence of that, we have the following:

> It is the duty of any party wishing to join the Communist International selflessly to help any Soviet republic in its struggle against counter-revolutionary forces (Condition 15).[2]

and

> All decisions of the Communist International's congresses and of its Executive Committee are binding on all affiliated parties (Condition 17).[3]

Consequently, the Soviet Communist Party, armed with two weapons, the Soviet government and the Comintern, two identical organizations, set out to create a communist world.

The Karakhan Manifestos: red-tinged "smile diplomacy"

Having failed to transform Germany into a communist state, the Soviet communists turned their gaze toward the East and zeroed in on China. The Xinhai Revolution seemed to have stalled there, but the May Fourth Movement had, fortuitously, reached its peak. The Soviets decided to engineer a communist revolution in China. The Soviets chose flattery as their bait, specifically the two Karakhan manifestos. Their author was Lev Karakhan, then the Soviet Deputy Commissar of Foreign Affairs.

Let us examine the first manifesto, dated July 25, 1919; here are some relevant excerpts from the USSR's first attempt at "smile diplomacy" in Asia: a declaration of friendship toward China.

> Immediately after [the Workers' and Peasants' Government took power, it] proclaimed that all the secret treaties concluded with Japan, China, and the former Allies were annulled … . The Soviet Government then proposed to the Chinese Government that they start negotiations to annul the treaty of 1896, the Peking protocol of 1901, and all agreements concluded with Japan between 1907 and 1916 … .
>
> (…)
>
> Now we again address the Chinese people, in order to open their eyes.
>
> The Soviet Government has renounced the conquests made by the Tsarist Government which deprived China of Manchuria and other areas. Let the people living in those areas themselves decide within the frontiers of which State they wish to dwell, and what form of government they wish to establish in their own countries.

[2] *Ibid*., 210.

[3] *Ibid.*, 211.

> The Soviet Government returns to the Chinese people without compensation of any kind the Chinese Eastern Railway, and all mining concessions, forestry, and gold mines which were seized from them by the government of Tsars, that of Kerensky, and the outlaws Horvath, Semenov, Kolchak, the Russian generals, merchants, and capitalists.
>
> The Soviet Government renounces the receipt from China of the 1900 Boxer rebellion indemnity … .
>
> (…)
>
> If the Chinese people wish, like the Russian people, to become free and to avoid the fate which the Allies prepared for them at Versailles, a fate designed to turn China into a second Korea or a second India, they must understand that their only allies and brothers in the struggle for freedom are the Russian workers and peasants and their Red Army.
>
> The Soviet Government proposes to the Chinese people, in the person of their Government, that they enter right away into official relations with us and send their representatives to meet our army.[4]

This was music to the ears of the Chinese people who, during the 80 years since the 1st Opium War, had been subjected to coercion and encroachment from the Allies. And as fate would have it, China just happened to be experiencing a maelstrom of nationalism in the wake of the May Fourth movement. The cunning sweet nothings whispered by the Soviets were like oil poured onto a fire. They further fanned the flames of nationalism, and boosted pro-Soviet sentiment.

Then, a year later, in 1920, at the Second Congress of the Comintern held in July, after deciding to bolster policies intended to create a communist world, the Soviets blithely released the second version of the Karakhan Manifesto in September, which was handed to the Beijing government.

Its main points are shown below.

I. The Government of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republics declares as void all the treaties concluded by the former Government of Russia with China, renounces all annexations of Chinese territory, all the concessions in China, and returns to China free of charge, and forever, all that was ravenously taken from her by the Tsar's Government and by the Russian bourgeoisie.

IV. All citizens of Russia residing in China must abide by all the laws and regulations in force in the territory of the Chinese Republic and shall not enjoy any rights of extraterritoriality whatever; Chinese citizens, residing in Russia, must similarly abide by all the laws and regulations in force on the territory of Russia.

[4] Allen S. Whiting, *Soviet Policies in China 1917-1924* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), 269-71.

VIII. The Russian and the Chinese Governments agree to conclude a special treaty as for the rules and regulations of exploitation of the Chinese Eastern Railway for the needs of the RSFSR.[5]

Dissembling manifestos

Both Karakhan manifestos were nothing more than sugar-coated poison. For instance, the return of the Chinese Eastern Railway "to the Chinese people without compensation of any kind," as promised in the 1st Karakhan Manifesto, was retracted and replaced with a reference to the conclusion of a special treaty relating to the railroad "for the needs of the RSFSR," in the 2nd Karakhan Manifesto. Moreover, when it comes to territorial matters, the main focus of the manifestos, the USSR has yet to return even one square centimeter of the Amur region and what is now known as Maritime province, lands wrested away from China by Tsarist Russia via the Convention of Peking (1858) and the Treaty of Aigun (1860), to China.

The USSR sold the Chinese Eastern Railway to Manzhouguo in 1935. Later, toward the end of World War II, a secret treaty was drawn up among the USSR, the UK and the US at the Yalta Conference concerning entry of the USSR into the war against Japan. It states, in part, that "the Chinese Eastern Railroad and the South Manchurian Railroad which provides an outlet to Dairen shall be jointly operated by the establishment of a joint Soviet-Chinese company it being understood that the preeminent interests of the Soviet Union shall be safeguarded… ."[6] Here the Soviets are demanding not only the Chinese Eastern Railway, but also the South Manchurian Railway! Furthermore, in the Yalta treaty the USSR also demanded the restoration of its lease on Port Arthur for use as a naval base. If the Allies' war against Japan had in fact been a just war whose objective had truly been safeguarding the sovereignty of China, then the secret Yalta treaty promising the restoration of Soviet special interests and leaseholds in China rendered the meaning of and justification for the war void. No, it is worse than that. The war against Japan was never motivated by the desire for international justice. The distortion of and inconsistencies in the war's objectives, like those mentioned above, were laid bare for all to see as the war came to an end.

In any case, the Karakhan manifestos were, pure and simple, deceptive tactics intended to use gestures of friendship to dispel China's distrust of the Soviets and lay the groundwork for the eventual communization of all of China. The realization that some Chinese leaders, thoughtless intellectuals, and students, accepted and even welcomed, however blindly, those gestures, gravitated toward the USSR and allowed their country to turn communist brings profound, penetrating sorrow to the hearts of all those familiar with China after it became communist, and the history of the Far East.

Soviet efforts to communize China progressed steadily. In July 1921 the 1st National Congress of the CCP was held in the French Concession in Shanghai. In attendance were 13 individuals representing the seven regions of China. At that time party members numbered slightly upwards

[6] Diane Shaver Clemens, *Yalta* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 310.

of 30 persons (60 according to another theory). In fact, the congress was no more than a clandestine gathering of a minority group alienated from the mainstream of Chinese society.

Party representatives included Li Da of Shanghai, Chen Gongbo of Guandong, Dong Biwu of Wuhan, Mao Zedong of Hunan, and Zhou Fohai representing Chinese students in Japan. Zhang Guotao of Beijing served as moderator. Holding sway over the congress were Henk Sneevliet (more commonly known by Maring, his pseudonym) and Grigori Voitinsky, representatives of the Comintern. It was at that congress that the Chinese Communist Party was formed; it proceeded to join the Comintern.

2. THE FIRST UNITED FRONT

Soviet overtures to Sun Yat-sen

In November 1921 the Comintern directed Dutch operative Maring (pseudonym of Henk Sneevliet), an Asia specialist, to approach Sun Yat-sen. In a ploy meant to allay Sun's wariness about communism, Maring stressed the flexibility of the Soviet policies, maintaining that their emphasis was not specifically on practicing communism, but on implementing a new economic policy (NEP). It is obvious that Sun believed Maring and that the NEP piqued his interest. Sun was obviously relieved that the NEP bore many similarities to Sun's principle of livelihood, and judging from what happened later, it made a deep impression on him.

A conversation between Maring and Sun revealed the yawning gulf between the worldviews of the two men. Maring, obviously an espouser of the communist worldview, asked Sun why he provoked revolution. Sun replied, "Because of my love for human beings." Maring, baffled by Sun's response to his question, later told GMD official Zhang Ji, "He says he causes revolution for the benefit of mankind, but if that is the case, his efforts will never succeed. We bring about revolution because we despise the human race."

Even on the basis of their starting points alone, Sun's Three Principles and the objectives of communism are as disparate as heaven and earth. Nevertheless, Sun was gravitating toward cooperation with the USSR, meaning that he was willing to tolerate communism.

On January 26, 1923 the Sun-Joffe Manifesto was announced. (Adolph Joffe was a Soviet diplomat.) The essentials of the four-page manifesto are as follows:

1. "Dr. Sun Yat-sen holds that the Communistic order or even the Soviet system cannot actually be introduced into China, because there do not exist here the conditions for the successful establishment of either Communism or Sovietism. This view is entirely shared by Mr. Joffe who is further of opinion that China's paramount and most pressing problem is to achieve national unification and attain full national independence, and regarding this great task he has assured Dr. Sun Yat-sen that China has the warmest sympathy of the Russian people and can count on the support of Russia."[1]

2. "In order to clarify the situation, Dr. Sun Yat-sen has requested Mr. Joffe for a reaffirmation of the principles defined in the Russian Note to the Chinese Government, dated September 27, 1920.[2] Mr. Joffe has accordingly reaffirmed these principles and categorically declared to Dr. Sun Yat-sen that the Russian Government is ready and willing to enter into negotiation with China on the basis of the renunciation by Russia of all the treaties and exactions which the Tsardom imposed in China, including the treaty or treaties and agreements relating to the

[1] Milton J.T. Shieh, *The Kuomintang: Selected Historical Documents 1894-1969* (Jamaica, NY: St. John's University Press, 1970), 71.

[2] Second Karakhan Manifesto.

Chinese Eastern Railway (the management of which being the subject of a specific reference in Article 7 of the said Note)."[3]

3. "[The realities of the Chinese Eastern Railway] situation point to the desirability of a *modus vivendi* in the matter of the present management of the Railway."[4]

4. "Mr. Joffe has categorically declared to Dr. Sun Yat-sen … that it is not and has never been the intention or purpose of the present Russian Government to pursue an imperialistic policy in Outer Mongolia or to cause it to secede from China."[5]

Once the Soviets had succeeded in insinuating themselves into Sun Yat-sen's revolution plans during negotiations between Sun and Joffe, they began work on a scheme whose objective was a collaboration between the three-year-old CCP and the GMD. Consequently, at the 3rd National Congress of the CCP, held in June 1923, it was decided that the GMD was the driving force of the people's revolution, and that the GMD and CCP would work together, forming the First United Front. Apparently, the Chinese communists concealed their primary mission, the communization of China, and cast their lot with the GMD, whose objective was a bourgeois democratic revolution. CCP members did this not of their own volition, but to comply with "tactical instructions" from the Comintern.[6]

Sun Yat-sen's rose-colored view of communism

In August 1923 Chiang Kai-shek met with Soviet agent Maring under orders from Sun Yat-sen. Chiang then visited the USSR as a member of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Mission to Soviet Russia, where he observed the Soviet armed services and political processes, and Communist Party affairs; he returned to China in December. His impressions of the USSR and the conclusions he reached about communism follow:

1. Tactics formulated for use against friends of the revolution are more numerous than those for use against enemies of the revolution.
2. Soviet political organizations are "instruments of tyranny and terror, and basically incompatible with the Kuomintang's political ideals."[7]
3. Russian leaders have "not given up their aggressive designs on Outer Mongolia."[8]
4. If I were asked to summarize my impressions from a three-month-long visit to the USSR, I would say that once the Soviet communist regime becomes a strong presence, it may very

[3] Shieh, *op. cit.*, 71-72.

[4] *Ibid.*, 72.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] Ōkubo Yasushi, *Chūgoku kyōsantō shi* (History of the Chinese Communist Party) (Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1971).

[7] Chiang Kai-shek, *Soviet Russia in China* (New York: The Noonday Press, 1957), 17.

[8] *Ibid.*

well revive the political ambitions of the Tsarist era. In that case, the calamities that befall our country and our people's revolution may be immeasurable.

5. The Soviet Communist Party's China policy is first to "convert the Northeast Provinces, Mongolia, Sinkiang [Xinjiang], and Tibet into parts of a sovietized domain. It may even harbor sinister designs on China's other provinces."[9]
6. The Soviet "brand of internationalism and World Revolution are but Czarism by other names, the better to confuse and confound the outside world."[10]
7. Before I departed on my journey to the USSR, I was convinced that the offer of aid from the Soviet Communist Party to the GMD was motivated by a sincere desire to treat us as equals, and was certainly not tinged with selfishness or malice. However, as a result of my observations in the USSR, those ideals and convictions evaporated like mist. I arrived at the conclusion that the United Front might help us to temporarily counter Western colonization policies, but would never enable us to achieve independence or freedom. I also felt that the tactics and purpose of the Soviet "world revolution" posed a greater danger to national independence movements in the Far East than Western colonization policies.

However, upon hearing Chiang's reports about his trip, Sun Yat-sen told him that his views about the future of Sino-Soviet relations were overly pessimistic and unsuited to the realities of revolution. Sun was convinced that the CCP could not succeed in sabotaging the national revolution by launching a class conflict if the GMD took control. Furthermore, if the Northern Expedition proved successful, attempts by the CCP to destroy the GMD would fail. The USSR would eventually recognize the GMD as the only political party capable of leading the Chinese revolution, and instruct the communists to join the GMD and obey its orders. Sun reminded Chiang that the Soviets had already conceded that they would not be able to inculcate communism in China. Sun was unwilling to make any changes to the plan he had established for the First United Front. Judging from Sun's frighteningly optimistic perception of communism, we can see how communist brainwashing quickly succeeded in penetrating the ranks of Chinese leadership.

Once the GMD decided to admit communists, CCP members began to infiltrate its ranks. Some joined on the basis of recommendations from other GMD members, others applied on an individual basis, and still others enrolled in groups. However, some of those new members did not divulge their communist affiliations for quite some time. In any case, not much time had passed before most CCP members had insinuated themselves into the GMD.

GMD reorganization under Soviet direction

In October 1923 the USSR dispatched an individual to China who went by the name of Borodin. His real name was Mikhail Gruzenberg, and he had been entrusted with a very important mission. Borodin paid a visit to Sun Yat-sen, to whom he indicated several major flaws in the GMD: the lack of both a unified party organization and strict discipline, as well as the absence of a popular support base. To become an effective revolutionary weapon, the GMD would need to

[9] *Ibid.*, 19.

[10] *Ibid.*

correct those deficiencies. Borodin seduced Sun by telling him that the time had not yet come for China to adopt communism, that the ultimate objectives of the CCP and the GMD were identical, and that the CCP should submit to GMD leadership. Sun agreed with every one of Borodin's suggestions, and immediately appointed him his advisor. Meanwhile, as already stated, more and more influential CCP members were joining the GMD. Sun Yat-sen decided to adopt Soviet and CCP tactics for his revolution. But first he addressed the reorganization of the GMD, on the eve of which he addressed party members. He told them that if they wanted to make the revolution a success they would have to learn from Russian-style methods, organizations, and training, adding that he hoped they would submit loyally to Borodin's opinions. Toward the end of October Sun Yat-sen established a provisional Central Executive Committee in Guangdong. He then began work on the draft of a manifesto, on a platform, and on the reorganization of the GMD, with Borodin again serving as his chief advisor.

The historic 1st National Congress of the GMD took place in Guangdong from January 20 to 30, 1924. Important matters ruled on at that gathering are as follows:

1. Reorganization of the GMD
   The new GMD, fashioned under the guidance and influence of Borodin and his group of Soviet advisors, almost completely replicated the structure of the Soviet Communist Party. To make the entire GMD into a monolithic, unified powerful combat unit, they adopted pyramid-shaped centralized authoritarian rule with a committee system. Incidentally, Sun stated that he was convinced that the Soviet Communist Party should be used as the model for GMD reorganization. He believed that the 1911 (Xinhai) Revolution was unsuccessful because the wrong means had been used to bring it about, unlike the Russian Revolution that occurred six years later, using the proper methods.

2. GMD-CCP United Front
   There were wide differences of opinion about the United Front within the GMD. Right-wing members like Feng Ziyou and Xie Yungbo felt uneasy about admitting communists into the GMD, citing the saying, "Rent a garret to the CCP, and they will end up taking over your whole house." Anyone of sound mind would have harbored suspicions of and doubts about the CCP, but at the 1st National Congress, Sun Yat-sen attempted to conciliate and persuade with the following:

   > The principle of livelihood, which our party already espouses, includes socialism, communism, and collectivism.[11] … The policies that Russia is implementing at this time are not pure communism, but simply policies intended to resolve problems relating to livelihood. I would like my fellow GMD members to understand that there is absolutely no conceptual conflict between communism and the principle of livelihood, only differences in scope.[12]

[11] Author's note: Since the principle of livelihood incorporates socialism, and socialism incorporates communism, communism is included in the principle of livelihood.

[12] Sun Yat-sen, *Zenshū* (Complete works), *Gaimushō Chōsabu yaku* (trans. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Research Division).

Sun Yat-sen argued that since the principle of livelihood was equivalent to socialism, it also embraced communism. Not only was his reasoning erroneous, it was also exceedingly imprudent and irresponsible.

After all, in August 1924, the same year in which the 1st National Congress of the Guomindang was held, Sun addressed the cadets at Whampoa (Huangpu) Military Academy. For the first time he categorically criticized Marxism and elucidated the standpoint of the Three Principles of the People vis à vis Marxism. Sun compared historical materialism with the historical perception of his principle of livelihood. While he denounced class struggle and advocated class collaboration, and indicated the errors in the theory of surplus value, he provided evidence to the effect that capitalism will never disappear, and praised the Ford Motor Company and its production system, which he described as ideal. Sun concluded by saying, "I have nothing but praise for Marx's scholarship, but cannot put Marxist methods into practice in China." There are absolutely no aspects of Sun's Three Principles that reject private ownership. The Republic of China Constitutional Draft, issued later by the Nanjing government, faithfully echoed the Three Principles of the People, but was in no way superior to the Weimar Constitution.[13] The intrinsic differences and discrepancies between the Three Principles and communism are blatantly obvious. The story of the Second United Front lends credence to the argument that the First United Front was the first step of a process designed to achieve a Comintern-CCP tactic: turning all of China communist. This would be accomplished by taking advantage of the GMD's strength, steadily communizing the GMD, and ultimately dominating the Chinese revolution. There were some GMD members who were doubtful and suspicious of the communists, men who opposed allowing communists to join the GMD, or who at least had enough foresight to demand clear requirements for membership in the GMD. Unfortunately, Sun Yat-sen failed to see through the communists' far-reaching conspiracy.

Consequently, more and more CCP members joined the GMD, and ensconced themselves in important GMD positions. For instance, the 24-member Central Executive Committee welcomed three communists, among them CCP co-founder Li Dazhao and founding member Tan Pingshan. Among 17 alternate members one finds the names of communists Lin Boqu and Mao Zedong. Furthermore, in addition to communists being appointed to key posts (Li Dazhao to head the Political Branch in Beijing; Lin Boqu, the GMD Department of Peasants; and Tan Pingshan, the Organization Department), a great many of them captured other important GMD positions, forming an influential core. There was, for all intents and purposes, a Communist Party operating openly within the GMD. The GMD could not (and did not) operate on its own terms, and the people's revolution could not continue to be a gradual, moderate process. From then on, the GMD and the people's revolution were at the mercy of the red demons residing inside them, and had no choice but to rush full speed ahead over the violent, radical track the communists had laid.

[13] Takahashi Yūji, *Son Bun* (Sun Yat-sen) (Tokyo: Nippon Hyōronsha, 1944).

3. Founding of the Whampoa Military Academy
   The third most important resolution made at the First National Congress of the GMD was to establish a military school in Huangpu (Guangdong province) where Nationalist Army officers could receive training. Preparations were made under Borodin's leadership, using financial aid from the Comintern. To train the cadets Soviet Army officer Galen (pseudonym of Vasily Blyukher) and many of his fellow officers were dispatched to China. Of particular note is the political education of soldiers, in which party leaders participated; a Political Department was established for that purpose. An inaugural ceremony was held in June 1924; Chiang Kai-shek was installed as superintendent, and here, too, communist elements wormed their way in early on: Ye Jianying was appointed deputy chairman of the Training Department, and Zhou Enlai deputy chairman of the Political Department.

4. Manifesto of the First National Congress
   Before the curtain fell on the historic congress, its final tasks (determining the GMD platform and publicly announcing the congress' manifesto) were completed. The manifesto consisted of three parts: (1) the present condition of China, (2) the principles of the GMD, and (3) the political platform of the GMD. The manifesto stressed the importance of realizing Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles, which are described therein as the principle of racial unity, the principle of popular sovereignty, and the principle of the people's livelihood. It mentions two aspects of the principle of racial unity: the pursuit of self-emancipation (independence for the Chinese people) and equality for all ethnicities in China (how to behave toward ethnic groups in remote areas of former Qing territory). About the second aspect, the manifesto states, "The Kuomintang solemnly declares that it recognizes the right of self-determination of all the races within the country; and that after the success of the revolution against the militarists and the imperialists, a freely united Republic of China, based on the free union of the races, will be established."[14] However, the promise of equality and self-determination for China's minorities was never fulfilled. To this day, China has yet to recognize self-determination or independence for the peoples of Xinjiang and Tibet, which is why independence movements accompanied by bloodshed have been erupting in those regions. Moreover, after the demise of the Qing dynasty, the Chinese claimed even Manchuria as their territory. Later, when the Manchurian Incident occurred, they denied independence and self-determination to the Manchus, and clashed with the Japanese, who advocated Manchu independence. Today even the name "Manchuria" is nowhere to be seen. It has been obliterated and replaced by "Northeast China."

A noteworthy item in the platform of the GMD concerns foreign policy: "All unequal treaties, such as foreign concessions, extraterritoriality, foreign control of customs, and all categories of political power exercised by foreigners in China and prejudicial to her sovereignty should be

[14] T.C. Woo, *The Kuomintang and the Future of the Chinese Revolution* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1928), 264.

cancelled, and new treaties based on the principle of equality and mutual respect for the sovereign rights of both parties should be negotiated to take their places."[15]

The inclusion of this language in the manifesto is a harbinger of the revolutionary diplomacy conducted by China in later years. The manifesto itself was based on a draft prepared by Borodin, and the Three Principles of the People that appear therein are said to be the greatest common denominator between Comintern-CCP revolutionary theory and Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary theory.

[15] *Ibid.*, 267.

CHAPTER 8: REVOLUTIONARY CHINA AND COMMUNISM

3. CCP CONSPIRACIES; CONFLICT BETWEEN CCP AND GMD

CCP machinations commence

CCP members who joined the GMD upon the formation of the First United Front wasted no time in showing their true colors. They immediately began conspiring to fragment and demolish the GMD. To spread Marxist propaganda, they made use of their weekly *Guide* magazine, books, and other periodicals. The communists also resorted to provocation and disruption, pinning leftist, rightist, or centrist labels on members of the GMD. To sow dissension and antagonism, they parroted their slogan, "Lean to the left for the revolution!"

Unsurprisingly, it was Borodin, the GMD's Soviet advisor, who presided over the CCP's campaign to communize the GMD. His evil influence extended even to the Huangpu Military Academy. First Borodin schemed to corrupt the cadets; then he attempted to gain control of the academy. Chiang Kai-shek, then its superintendent, recalled those days in the following:

> On January 25, 1925, the Communists sponsored a Young Servicemen's Club for dual-party elements in both the academy and the armed units. They even spread the rumor that I, too, had joined the Communist organization. Cadets in the academy and officers and men in the armed forces, who were loyal to the Three People's Principles and to the Kuomintang, formed under the leadership of Chen Cheng an opposition body known as the Society for the Study of Sun Yat-sen-ism.[1]

Early in 1925, only a year after the inception of the First United Front, the CCP drafted a secret resolution entitled "Tactics for Use on the GMD." The main tactics are listed below:

(1) Regard each GMD department as a CCP organization dedicated to group activity. Make a concerted effort to use these organizations to achieve the objectives of our party.
(2) Approach left-leaning members of the GMD, such as Wang Jingwei and Liao Zhongkai, with caution. Indoctrinate them gradually until they become genuine CCP members.
(3) Disrupt ties between powerful individuals and the GMD.
(4) Obstruct the establishment of friendly relations between the GMD and any nation other than the USSR.
(5) Create an environment within the GMD and in society at large that is skeptical and critical of the Three Principles of the People.
(6) Infiltrate society's organizations; subvert contemporary society.
(7) Destroy GMD programs intended to raise workers' living standards.
(8) Infiltrate student organizations in Beijing and elsewhere; convert them into organizations that can be used for CCP purposes.

One look at this resolution and we are convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that the First United Front was an illusion. Sensible GMD members thought the communists had ulterior motives. But

[1] Chiang Kai-shek, *op. cit.*, 26.

Sun Yat-sen never lost faith in the CCP. That explains why he launched the First United Front, which taught us how devastating the consequences of an optimistic stance about communism can be. In fact, the blind acceptance of communism was the gravest mistake made by fledgling China. All the ruinous chaos and wars in the Far East during and after the 1920s can be traced to China's (or Sun Yat-sen's) blunders.

Sun Yat-sen dies in Beijing

On November 10, 1924 Sun Yat-sen issued his Manifesto on a Northbound Journey, which called for the abrogation of unequal treaties and the holding of a national convention. He had then planned to travel to Beijing in response to requests from northern warlords Duan Qirui and Zhang Zuolin. His purpose in going there was to broker peace with the Guangdong military government and to make plans for the peaceful unification of China. What were his true reasons for embarking on that journey? According to one GMD member, Sun had at that point already abandoned any hopes for Guangdong. As the saying goes, Sun Yat-sen had rented a garret to the CCP, but the CCP had taken over his whole house. Some historians maintain that Sun did awaken to the enormity of his error in forming the United Front, but not until communism began to penetrate Guangdong. Sun decided that to reverse that trend, he would make his northward journey in the hope of forming an alliance with the Beijing government. When he departed, he was followed by many anti-communist GMD members, presumably because they agreed with him.[2]

Sun interrupted his journey from Guangdong to Beijing with a 10-day detour to Japan, during which he delivered his famous speech on Pan-Asianism at Kobe Girls' High School.[3] By the time he arrived in Tianjin, in the beginning of December, he was very ill. Sun Yat-sen died in Beijing on March 12, 1925, at the age of 60, after all available medical means had been exhausted. The cause of death was liver cancer.

The day before he died, Sun signed two wills drawn up by Wang Jingwei. On his deathbed he stated that he wanted to be buried at Purple Mountain in Nanjing.

One of the two wills was intended for GMD members. It ends with the following:

> The Revolution has not yet been successfully concluded. Let all our comrades follow my writings – The Plans of National Reconstruction, the Fundamentals of National Reconstruction, and the Manifesto of the First Congress of Representatives – and make every effort to carry them into effect. Above all, my recent declaration in favor of holding a National Convention of the People of China and abolishing the unequal treaties should be carried into effect as soon as possible.
>
> This is my last will and testament.[4]

[2] Furukawa Gyōson, *Kindai Shina gaikō hiroku* (Confidential diplomatic records from modern China) (Tokyo: Uedaya Shoten, 1936).

[3] https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Sun_Yat-sen%27s_speech_on_Pan-Asianism

[4] C. Martin Wilbur, *Sun Yat-sen, Frustrated Patriot* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 278.

The other was addressed to his family.

Apart from those two wills, a third was publicized after Sun's death, both in China and the USSR. Addressed to the Central Committee of the USSR, it expressed his wishes that the association between the two nations would last for all eternity. It read, in part:

> I have charged the party to keep in constant touch with you, and I look with confidence to the continuance of the support that your Government has heretofore extended to my country.
>
> In bidding farewell to you, dear comrades, I wish to express the fervent hope that the day may soon dawn when the U.S.S.R. will greet, as a friend and ally, a strong and independent China and the two allies may together advance to victory in the great struggle for the liberation of the oppressed peoples of the world.[5]

This third will emerged suddenly on the day before Sun Yat-sen's death; it was produced by Eugene Chen, a left-leaning GMD member and Sun's secretary for English-language matters. Soong Qing-ling (Sun's wife and elder sister of politician Soong Tse-ven) read it aloud. It was written in English, and was apparently drafted by Chen and Borodin. But unlike the other two wills, it was not examined by Sun's close associates, nor was it signed. The GMD never authenticated it. It should be viewed as a malicious Comintern deed intended to capitalize on Sun Yat-sen's death.

CCP commandeers the "whole house"

At around the time when Sun Yat-sen arrived in Beijing, Feng Ziyou and other anti-communist GMD members who had traveled there from Guangzhou suddenly made a move. They demanded that Sun expel communists from the GMD. Additionally, in March 1925 right-wing members like Xie Chi and Zhang Ji, who had gathered in Beijing, joined with other kindred spirits to form the GMD Comrades' Club.[6] The organization issued a declaration demanding the expulsion of CCP members from the GMD. Here is an excerpt.

> The party operates under a prescribed doctrine and platform. Its members are required to work together under the same flag to serve our nation. Nevertheless, while Communist Party members deceive Sun Yat-sen, our leader, swearing that they are loyal to the GMD, they use the name of our party to benefit *their* party, and are destroying the GMD. They accept financial assistance from the USSR, corrupt China's youth, and mislead laborers. They are doing their level best to transform the GMD into a communist party, to which end they are making a concerted effort to sabotage our party. They have become puppets of the USSR, who now call for the relinquishment of Outer Mongolia. They disrupt party affairs. They slander the great majority of our comrades, calling them counterrevolutionaries and traitors to the

[5] Wilbur, *op. cit.*, 279-80.

[6] C. Martin Wilbur, *Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Soviet Advisors in China, 1918-1927: Papers Seized in the 1927 Peking Raid* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), 160.

> party. The day when the Three Principles of the People and communism walk hand in hand will never come.[7]

The aforementioned CCP resolution, "Tactics for Use on the GMD," clearly corroborates the claims made in the preceding excerpt. The anti-communist GMD members in Guangzhou adopted a stubborn stance against that resolution. Then Wang Jingwei and other left-wing GMD members who had accompanied Sun Yat-sen to Beijing retaliated swiftly by announcing the expulsion of Feng Ziyou and 320 others from the GMD. It was amidst this left-right conflict in the party that Sun Yat-sen's life came to an end.

With Sun's death, the friction between left and right became especially egregious. Communist elements viewed it as an excellent opportunity to divide the GMD. Spurred on by advice from the Comintern and Borodin, they split the party into three factions: rightists, centrists, and leftists. They then attempted to take advantage of the resulting internecine strife to gain control of GMD leadership. Their three-stage strategy was as follows:

> First stage: To overthrow the Rightists by allying with the Leftists and the middle of the roaders.
> Second stage: To isolate the "New Rightists" from among the Leftists.
> Third Stage: After the overthrow of the "New Rightists," to isolate and attack the middle of the roaders.[8]

July 1, 1925 marked the inauguration of the National Government. At Borodin's urging, Wang Jingwei was installed as chairman of the State Council. The armed forces were renamed the "National Revolutionary Army." In December of the same year, Lin Sen and other anti-communists gathered at the Biyun Temple at the foot of the Western Hills in Beijing and issued an anti-communist resolution. This gathering came to be known as the Western Hills Conference, and those who attended it, the Western Hills Group. The resolution included three main items.

1. Expulsion of nine CCP members, including Tan Pingshan, Li Dazhao, and Mao Zedong, from the GMD
2. Dismissal of Borodin
3. Suspension of Wang Jingwei's GMD membership for six months

The GMD was now in crisis, having split into two: the Western Hills Conference faction and the Guangzhou faction. On January 1, 1926 the Second National Congress of the GMD commenced in Guangzhou. It was dominated by communist members who held sway over the proceedings. CCP members introduced a resolution calling for the censure of the Western Hills Group, which was adopted. Communist members acquired every important party position. As Chiang lamented,

---

[7] Ōkubo, *op. cit.*

[8] Furuya Keiji, *Chiang Kai-shek: His Life and Times*, ed. Chun-ming Chang (New York: St. John's University, 1981), 158.

"CCP members have taken over almost every leadership organization in the GMD. These parasites have truly advanced from the garret to the main house."[9]

There was no official mention of the Three Principles of the People during that congress. The atmosphere was such that anyone who broached the subject would have been accused of high treason and immorality.

Ascent of Chiang Kai-shek; preparations for Northern Expedition

Chiang Kai-shek first publicly broached his proposal for the Northern Expedition at the Second National Congress of the GMD. When the congress ended, Borodin was suddenly recalled to Moscow. His duties as head of the Soviet advisory group were taken over by Kisanka (whose real name was Nikolay Kuibyshev). Kisanka insisted that the Northern Expedition was bound to fail and began to make efforts to block it. Why did the CCP and the USSR objection to the expedition? They were afraid that if it succeeded, Chiang Kai-shek's popularity and reputation would soar. At the time the CCP had no army of its own. Therefore, the communists were also worried that the GMD would be the beneficiary of any triumphs from the Northern Expedition. The party would then loom so large that the CCP would have a hard time destroying it. Until it had its own armed forces, the CCP had to do everything in its power to prevent Chiang's Northern Expedition from taking place.[10] The campaign to discredit Chiang, which began after the Second National Congress, was also a campaign to block the Northern Expedition.

The *Zhongshan* Incident of March 1926 provided the impetus for Chiang to crack down on the CCP, and strengthened his resolve to conduct the Northern Expedition. The incident itself was a communist plot whose central figure was Li Zhilong, a CCP member and acting director of the Naval Forces Bureau. The idea was to dispose of Chiang Kai-shek by moving the *Zhongshan*, supposedly under orders from Chiang Kai-shek, luring Chiang on board, and transporting him to the USSR. Once he got wind of the conspiracy, Chiang declared martial law, arrested Li and other communist elements, and recaptured the *Zhongshan*. He also terminated Kisanka and some of the other Russian military advisers, and sent them home. In May GMD left-wing leader Wang Jingwei quietly left Guangzhou and sailed for France, supposedly for medical reasons.

In the wake of the *Zhongshan* Incident relations between Chiang Kai-shek and both the CCP and the left wing of the GMD grew precipitously acrimonious. Chiang had foiled the communist plot to seize Guangzhou and leftist leader Wang had gone abroad. Now backed by the military, Chiang found his status had risen. He proposed the Northern Expedition to the national government, which approved it. Now head of the National Military Council, Chiang was appointed commander in chief in June. Plans for the Northern Expedition moved forward rapidly. On July 1, 1926 the National Military Council issued the mobilization order. Eight armies comprising 100,000 men made preparations as they awaited their marching orders.

---

[9] Shō Kaiseki (Chiang Kai-shek), *Shō Kaiseki hiroku* (Confidential records of Chiang Kai-shek) (Tokyo: Sangyō Keizai Shinbunsha, 1974-76).

[10] Kayanuma Hiro, *Chūgoku kakumei 40 nen* (Forty years of revolution in China) (Tokyo: Fukumura Shoten, 1954).

CHAPTER 9: CONTENDING WITH ATTEMPTS TO COMMUNIZE CHINA

1. THE NANJING INCIDENT

Comintern capitalizes on Northern Expedition

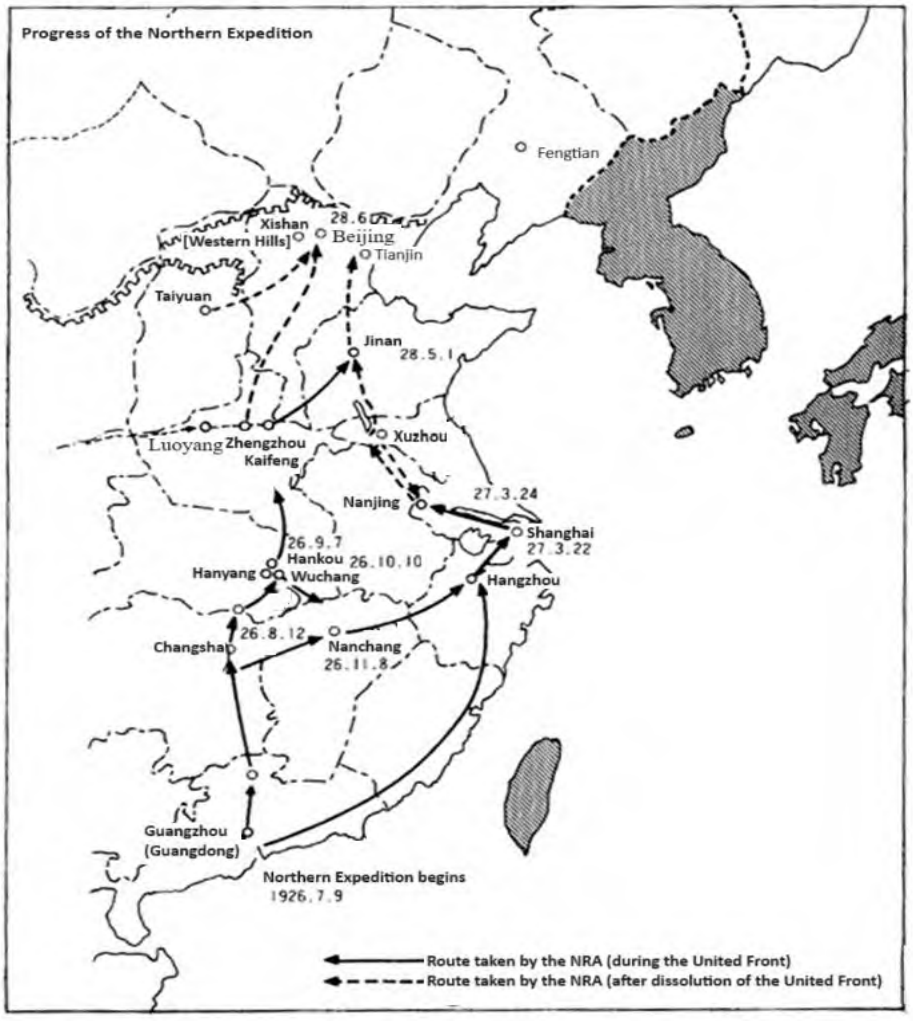
Immediately after the sudden death of Sun Yat-sen, the contradictions inherent in the United Front came to light. As they surfaced, Chiang Kai-shek was gaining prominence and military strength. He was eager to move forward with the Northern Expedition, maintaining that it would help unite China. He prevailed, and the NRA (National Revolutionary Army), with Chiang as its commander in chief, marched out of Guangdong in July 1926, completing its mission two years later, in August 1928, in Beijing. During the expedition NRA troops committed numerous unlawful acts against the persons of Japanese and other foreign residents, as well as their property and interests. The CCP was responsible for most of those crimes. The Manchurian Incident of 1931 was not spur of the moment; the path to it was paved with historical developments, among them violent anti-Japanese acts with the telltale signs of communist terrorism.

The objective of the Northern Expedition, launched by Chiang's NRA, was the defeat of the Beiyang warlords, who enjoyed free rein in northern China. They were (1) Wu Peifu, with his 250,000 men in Henan, Hubei, Hunan, Sichuan, and Guizhou; (2) Sun Chuanfang, with 200,000 men in the five provinces of Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Anhui, Fujian, and Jiangxi; and (3) Zhang Zuolin with his 500,000-man-strong Fengtian, Hebei and Shandong armies, as well as substantial forces in the three eastern provinces (Manchuria), as well as Rehe, Chahar, Hebei, and Shandong. In contrast, the NRA had only 100,000 men divided among eight armies. On July 9 the NRA issued the beginning of its campaign. On the following day, July 10, NRA troops occupied Changsha. From there, Chiang's armies advanced in three directions: left, center, and right.

Once it became clear that the Northern Expedition would come to pass, the CCP did an about-face, prompted by the Comintern, and came out in enthusiastic support of the mission. Borodin issued strict orders that CCP members were to establish and expand the party's political strength after each NRA victory, and to make a concerted effort to escalate the activities of CCP labor movements in Wuhan and Shanghai, and peasant associations in other regions. Accordingly, as the Northern Expedition progressed, the CCP poured all its energy into its peasant movements (in Guangdong, Hunan, Jinan, and Hubei) and labor movements (in Shanghai and Hankou). The party suddenly began to believe itself the guiding force in the national revolution. The communists, in high spirits, stood at the head of the expedition forces, and at every destination launched their peasant- and labor-related campaigns. Some of the results of their efforts are shown in the following table.[1]

[1] Hatano Ken'ichi, *Kyōsantō shi* (History of the Chinese Communist Party) (Tokyo: Jiji Press, 1961).

	1925	1926	1927
Labor union members	450,000	1,200,000	2,800,000
GMD members	994	12,000	57,900
Peasant association members	200,000	3,000,000	9,800,000



Moscow ecstatic about new Wuhan communist government

NRA campaigns met with spectacular success. In September Nationalist forces occupied Hanyang, and then Hankou. With the fall of Wuchang on October 10, they had gained control of the three cities of Wuchang, Hankou, and Hanyang, which were combined to form the city of Wuhan in 1926. When Wuhan was defeated, the CCP refused to obey Chiang Kai-shek's orders to attack Nanchang. Instead, the communists formed an alliance with Tang Shengzhi, the most powerful warlord in the Wuhan region, their objective being to establish Wuhan as a base for CCP and left-wing GMD members.

Chiang's reaction was to temporarily ignore the communists' machinations and concentrate on assaulting Shanghai and Nanjing, while resolving to reach a compromise with the Wuhan forces. On February 21, 1927 GMD headquarters announced that the government had been moved to Wuhan. This was a communist government administered by the CCP and the GMD's left wing.

The Comintern was ecstatic about the news that the Wuhan government had been established. Before the Northern Expedition commenced, Moscow's attitude toward the Chinese revolution had been rather enigmatic. But as tensions between the left and right wings of the GMD began to surface when the NRA occupied Wuhan, the Comintern's China operations, channeled through the CCP, became more brazen. And since Stalin, with his predilection for defending the west and advancing eastward, had seized real power in the Comintern, the organization's operations in China became steadily more aggressive.

The first instance of blatant Soviet interference took the form of the December Resolution issued by the Comintern in 1926. The document laid out the path the CCP was to take — a path of violence — directing it to arm the Chinese peasantry and to engage in an all-out battle with the right wing of the GMD.[2] It also thoroughly discredited the Three Principles of the People.[3] The document was said to have been confiscated in April 1927 when Zhang Zuolin's government conducted a search of the Soviet Embassy in Beijing.

The December Resolution further fueled the arrogance of the CCP, a trait that had never been in abeyance. It obstructed Chiang Kai-shek's Northern Expedition, and eventually led to the hatching of even wilder schemes and radical tactics intended to overthrow Chiang. In March 1927 the Wuhan government relieved Chiang of his position as NRA commander in chief.

Though Chiang was no longer nominal commander in chief, he ignored the demotion and continued with his mission. After all, he enjoyed a tremendous amount of military power. By the waning days of March 1927, his forces had occupied the environs of Shanghai, as well as Hangzhou and Nanjing. He was in control of almost the entire area south of the lower reaches of

[2] Jane Degras, "Extracts from the Resolution of the Seventh ECCI Plenum on the Chinese Situation" in *The Communist International, 1919-1943: Documents*, vol. 2 (London: Frank Cass & Co., Ltd., 1971); https://archive.org/details/communistinterna0002comm/page/26/mode/2up.

[3] Nihon Gaiji Kyōkai (Foreign Affairs Association of Japan), *Shina ni okeru kyōsan undō* (The communist movement in China) (Tokyo: Nihon Gaiji Kyōkai, 1933).

the Yangzi River. Chiang's forces gradually assembled in Nanjing, and friction between the Nanjing and Wuhan factions intensified.

Retrocession of British Concession; reaction from Western powers

Ahead of the Nanjing Incident, which occurred during the Northern Expedition, another incident erupted involving the seizure of British concessions in Jiujiang and Hankou (Jiangxi province). That certainly seemed like a bad omen.

In Hankou there were British, Japanese, and French concessions. The British Concession was located in the city's commercial center, where Japan's main banks and shops were also located. On the evening of January 3, 1927 the British Concession in Hankou was seized by the Chinese, as was its counterpart in Jiujiang on January 7.

The commandeering of the two concessions by the Nationalist government was a huge shock to the UK and other Western powers. It was understandable for them to take urgent action to defend their concessions in Shanghai, where their Chinese interests were concentrated. Whether or not one condones them, the concessions were established in accordance with international treaties. As long as the Chinese were going to recover them by force, the Western powers had no choice but to use force to prevent their seizure. In mid-January Japan, the UK, the US, and France devised a contingency plan to maintain a presence of 4,000-5,000 soldiers in Shanghai.

On March 21 the NRA, marching northward from Hangzhou, reached a location four miles from southern Shanghai; martial law was declared in Shanghai. The Shanghai Public Works Bureau mobilized volunteer soldiers and police officers, and then asked for assistance from the navies of Western powers. In response, the US, Japan, and other nations sent landing parties. The number of troops from Western nations swelled to a total of 12,500 (9,000 from the UK, 1,500 from the US, 1,500 from Japan, 400 from France, and 50 from Italy[4]). Additionally, a total of 31 ships, including 11 from Japan, 11 from the UK, and five from the US, assembled at Shanghai.

The feared collision between the NRA and foreign units upon the former's entry into Shanghai was avoided, thanks to policing on the part of the Western powers.

Nanjing Incident breaks out

Though a confrontation between the NRA and foreign legations in Shanghai was circumvented, Nanjing was not so fortunate during its occupation by the NRA.

For the expedition, the NRA was divided into three armies, the organization of which is shown in the following table

.

[4] These figures do not include volunteers from Shanghai.

NRA Army	Commander	Itinerary
Western Route Army	Tang Shengzhi	Head north along Jinghan Railway; engage with Wu Peifu's army in Henan
Eastern Route Army	He Yingshin commander in chief) Bai Chongxi (former enemy commander)	Attack Zhejiang from Fujian and Jiangxi
Central Route Army		
Yangzi Right Bank Army	Cheng Qian	Second and Sixth corps advance eastward along the southern bank of the Yangzi; attack Nanjing
Yangzi Left Bank Army	Li Zongren	Advance eastward along the northern bank of the Yangzi to Bengbu, a strategic point on the the Tianjin-Pukou Railway

At 7:00 p.m. on March 22, when the northern warlords' forces were near annihilation, Japanese Consul Morioka Shōhei had all Japanese women and children evacuate their residences and take shelter at the Japanese Consulate in Nanjing. Joining him and the refugees were Lt. Araki Kameo from the destroyer *Hinoki*, accompanied by nine sailors and one signalman. On the following evening, retreating troops from the warlord armies surged into Nanjing through the South Gate, rushing past the gate of the consulate, and headed for the city's Xiaguan district. At that point Morioka instructed all Japanese men to join the others inside the consulate. About 100 Japanese sought refuge there. When night fell the front gate was closed, and sandbags and machine guns brought inside for protection. The sailors, armed with rifles, stood guard.

At about 5:30 a.m. on March 24 NRA troops advancing from the south began to pour into Nanjing, bearing the blue-and-white GMD flag. They passed by the consulate and headed for Xiaguan. Since it is usually defeated straggler units who plunder as they retreat, with the entry of NRA troops into Nanjing the fear of looting had subsided. In any case, it would have been absolutely impossible for 10 sailors to fend off several thousand Chinese troops. Therefore, the consul decided that it would be prudent to remove the sandbags and machine guns expeditiously, and Lt. Araki agreed with him. After getting rid of the sandbags and machine guns, and disarming the guards and storing their weapons, the consular staff opened the front gate.

Unfortunately, before long approximately 50 regular NRA soldiers clad in uniforms and regulation caps and carrying pistols, burst into the consulate, invading its offices and living quarters. When Consular Police Chief Kimura Mitsui attempted to stop them, not only was he captured and all his possessions stolen, but someone also fired a rifle at him from close range. The bullet penetrated his forearm. The NRA soldiers ordered Maj. Nemoto Hiroshi, a military attaché who was in the office, to supply the key to the safe. When he refused, they struck him in the back with the butt of a rifle. From the office the intruders began shooting at the dining room. Then, at the signal of a whistle, they attacked the consul's residence, which they began to plunder. They did not spare even Morioka's sickroom (the consul had been confined to his bed for about a month, unable to walk due to a gangrenous leg). The hordes of NRA soldiers proceeded to steal everything in sight, loading their booty into automobiles, horse-drawn carriages, and rickshaws they had brought for the purpose. According to a report written by the consul, "The evacuees were pursued from all

directions like flocks of sheep pursued by wolves. The women were forced to undergo innumerable, agonizing 'physical examinations.' Their screams were more than I could bear." The trespassers stooped so low as to steal even Morioka's nightclothes and bed linen. They shot at him twice, but fortunately missed. Both military attaché Kimura and Maj. Nemoto were bayoneted. Since Lt. Araki and the nine sailors under his command were in uniform, they decided not to provoke the NRA troops and sought refuge in the servants' quarters.

It is important to remember that at that time, the memory of the Nikolayevsk Massacre was still fresh in their minds. The Japanese evacuees appealed to the landing party to adhere strictly to the principle of nonresistance. Consul Morioka begged Japanese military personnel to temporarily remove any insignia or caps revealing their ranks. Lt. Araki acquiesced for the sake of the evacuees. Eventually the number of NRA invaders swelled from some 150 to more than 200; the looting lasted for more than three hours. Chinese soldiers, now reduced to rabble, waved their flags and joined in a chorus of slogans: "Down with Japanese and British imperialism!" "*Hua E yijia*" (China and the Soviet Union are one!). Morioka's report describes how before long several hundred Chinese civilians, including women and children, joined the looters, and the mob stole everything in sight, even floorboards, toilets, and empty bottles.[5]

That evening all Japanese, civilians and military personnel, vacated the consulate and were accommodated on board a battleship moored on the Yangzi. On March 29 Lt. Araki attempted suicide on board the cruiser *Tone* to take responsibility for the indignities suffered by his compatriots.

The NRA also looted the British and American consulates, and schools and offices. To rescue their civilians, both nations shelled the city of Nanjing from battleships on the Yangzi at 3:40 p.m. on March 24 for about an hour. They expended some 200 shells. Commander Araki Jirō was on board a Japanese destroyer on the Yangzi. But since he was not aware of the fate of Japanese residents in Nanjing, he did not join in the attack launched by the British and Americans, fearing that doing so would trigger a massacre.[6]

According to Chinese diplomatic sources the shots fired from the British and American battleships killed 12 persons and wounded 20.

[5] Usui Katsumi, *Nitchū gaikōshi: hokubatsu no jidai* (A history of diplomatic relations between Japan and China) (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobō, 1971); Etō Shinkichi, "Nankin jiken to Nichi Bei" (The Nanjing incident and US-Japan relations) in *Higashi Ajia seijishi kenkyū* (Research on East Asian political history) (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1968), 149-76; Sasaki Tōichi, *Aru gunjin no jiden* (Autobiography of a career soldier) (Tokyo: Futsūsha, 1963).

[6] "Nankin jiken minami gun no bōkō jōkyō" (Acts of violence committed by southern forces in Nanjing) in *Gaimushō kiroku* (Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) (Tokyo: National Archives of Japan, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records).

A total of seven foreign nationals died in the Nanjing Incident: one each from Japan, the US, Italy, France, and Denmark, with two persons unaccounted for.[7]

Comintern wields clandestine control

Who was behind the Nanjing Incident? Consul Morioka reported that it was a systematic, xenophobic uprising planned and perpetrated by CCP officials and junior officers in the NRA Army, in concert with members of the Nanjing branch of the CCP. On the basis of that report, Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō concluded that the incident was a desperate attempt to undermine and ultimately overthrow Chiang Kai-shek.

NRA officials agreed, telling the Japanese that the incident was the result of a conspiracy hatched by delinquent soldiers and CCP members based in Nanjing.

John K. Davis, American consul at Nanjing, sent the following statement concerning the malefactors to the US Secretary of State in Washington, D.C.:

> I am convinced beyond the slightest possibility of doubt, that all were regular Kuomintang troops who were operating under orders. From all reports from all other Americans and other nationals I am certain that this condition was uniform, and that not in a single instance was an American or other foreigner molested on March 24th by any defeated northern soldiers.[8]

US Minister in China John V. MacMurray telegraphed Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg on March 28, as follows:

> As I am absolutely convinced this campaign of terrorism and insult to foreigners was not only officially countenanced by [sic] and directed but even prearranged, the incident could hardly have been more outrageous.[9]

There is no doubt that the Nanjing Incident was the work of Chinese communists who had infiltrated the ranks of the NRA. We may also assume that it was the result of suggestions, or even orders, from the USSR. One item of evidence is a secret document containing instructions for the Soviet military attaché in China. Right-wing members of the GMD acquired this document, which was partially destroyed by fire, but here is an excerpt, the fifth item of the instructions:

---

[7] "Nankin ni okeru Shina hei no bōkō oyobi ryakudatsu jiken" (Acts of violence and looting committed by Chinese troops in Nanjing) in *Gaimushō kiroku* (Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) (Tokyo: National Archives of Japan, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records).

[8] US Department of State, Office of the Historian, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Letter from Consul John K. Davis at Nanking to the Secretary of State, 28 March 1927, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1927v02/d136.

[9] US Department of State, Office of the Historian, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Telegram, The Minister in China John V. MacMurray to the Secretary of State*, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1927v02/d135.

5. It is necessary to take all measures to arouse the masses of the people against the foreigners … To bring on internal interference by foreign Powers, do not hesitate to use any measures, including even robbery and beatings. In case of clashes with European troop detachments make broad use of these incidents for agitation.[10]

These instructions clearly pinpoint the scheme that culminated in the incident, crafted by the Comintern and the CCP, whose objective was to foment clashes between the NRA and the masses, and foreign nations, thus bringing about the downfall of Chiang Kai-shek, and to eliminate the right wing of the GMD, thereby communizing the party in one fell swoop.

Masterminding the plot was Borodin, the Soviet adviser, as usual. According to *Chiang Kai-shek, His Life and Times*, Borodin's henchmen were CCP members Lin Boqu and Li Fuchun, heads of the political departments of the Sixth Army and Second Army, respectively. Add to them Cheng Qian, commander of the Central Route Army, whom Lin and Li used to their advantage. On March 23, the eve of the incident, Borodin convened a meeting of the CCP Central Committee, where Lin proposed that Cheng Qian be appointed to head the Jiangsu Political Council (which had jurisdiction over Shanghai and Nanjing). Cheng, eager to gain a foothold in Jiangsu, threw his lot in with the CCP. On the day of the Nanjing Incident, the aforementioned Second and Sixth armies were the first to enter Nanjing.

The international community also agreed that the Nanjing Incident was a CCP plot. On May 9, 1927 Austen Chamberlain, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, made the following remarks in a speech before the British House of Commons:

> The looting of foreign property at Nanking and the shooting of foreigners were the culmination of a continued policy of agitation, rapine, terrorism and murder; the tools of this policy were the unpaid soldiery of the Nationalist armies and the mobs of the great cities, but its organisation and driving force were borrowed, directly or indirectly, from the Third International. … The organised side of the Nanking outrages appears to have been an attempt to embroil Chiang Kai-shek with the foreign Powers.
>
> (…)
>
> [The incident] has split the Communist wing from the Kuomintang party, and—most important of all—it has deeply discredited the Communists and their foreign advisers in the eyes of all China.
>
> (…)

[10] Furuya Keiji, Chiang Kai-shek, His Life and Times (New York: St. John's University, 1981), 189 (abridged translation of Shō Kaiseki hiroku (Private files of Chiang Kai-shek), serialized in the Sankei Shinbun from August 15, 1974 to the end of 1976).

> We have added that His Majesty's Government reserve to themselves full liberty of action as to the future, and in particular in respect of any further outrages which may be perpetrated on the British flag, British nationals and British property.[11]

Three days later British authorities raided the Soviet Trade Delegation and confiscated documents found therein. On May 17 Britain severed diplomatic relations with the USSR.

Every sort of circumstantial evidence demonstrates that the Nanjing Incident was a premeditated act perpetrated by communist elements that had infiltrated the NRA. Additionally, including the aforementioned secret instructions from Moscow, the large number of secret documents (to be discussed later) confiscated at the Soviet Embassy in Beijing by Zhang Zuolin prove beyond any doubt that the incident was a rampage planned and informed by the Comintern's revolutionary strategy.

PRC textbooks pervert the facts

What does the aforementioned Chinese textbook, *Chinese History*, have to say about the Nanjing Incident?

> The imperialists attempted to destroy the revolution in order to protect their reactionary rule in China. On March 24 the Northern Expedition forces occupied Nanjing. That night England, the US, Japan, and other imperialist nations fired on the city like maniacs, killing or injuring more than 2,000 Chinese soldiers and civilians.

Not one word was devoted to a description of the brutal acts committed by Chinese troops; the account makes it seem as though the Western assault on Nanjing was completely unprovoked. Additionally, by stating that the attack on Nanjing took place at night, the authors of the textbook give the mistaken impression that the shelling was indiscriminate. In fact, the assault took place in daylight, at 3:10 p.m., and lasted approximately one hour. To make matters worse, the textbook account accuses the Japanese, who steadfastly maintained a stance of non-resistance, of participating in the shelling. A prime example of historical falsification, it takes the art of exaggeration to astonishing limits by increasing the number of Chinese casualties by a factor of 60!

Also conspicuous for its prevarication is Hu Hua's *History of the New Democratic Revolution in China*, which offers the following account:

> When reactionary forces were fleeing Nanjing, violent acts and looting occurred. On that evening, consuls representing England, the US, Japan, France, Italy, and other nations ordered their battleships moored on the Yangzi to fire on Nanjing. As a result more than 2,000 Chinese soldiers and civilians were killed or wounded.[12]

[11] Hansard, HC Deb 09 May vol 206 cc19-25, https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1927/may/09/sir-a-chamberlains-statement#S5CV0206P0_19270509_HOC_135.

[12] Hu Hua, *Zhongguo xin minzhu zhuyi geming shi* (History of the new democratic revolution in China) (Beijing: Renmin Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1955).

The author not only places the blame for the rioting on the northern forces, *not* on the NRA advancing from the south, but also maintains that the Japanese participated in the shelling.

Similarly, in his widely read *Chiang Kai-shek: Enemy of the People*, Chen Boda devotes not one word to NRA violence in Nanjing, instead stating that "when the NRA captured Nanjing, American and British battleships fired on the city; the shelling continued for the entire day." To make the UK and US look like villains, Chen prolongs the length of the assault.[13]

These are the sort of accounts about the Nanjing Incident that are found in government-designated modern Chinese history textbooks. The "information" therein is instilled in the minds of young people in every school in China. It is not difficult to imagine how they must feel about Japan when they grow up, after indoctrination of this sort. When I contemplate this situation, I am filled with pessimism about future relations between Japan and China. Nevertheless, the Chinese persist in expounding on friendship between our two nations. All the while, they denounce Japan's history textbooks for "distorting historical fact" and insist that we "present the true facts." But look at their history textbooks. We must always be mindful that the Chinese are masters at distorting and inventing historical fact, as well as arousing hateful sentiment toward Japan.

Secret Comintern directives discovered

On April 6, not long after the Nanjing Incident, Zhang Zuolin, now the dominant figure in Beijing, raided the Soviet Embassy, where he discovered a great number of CCP members hiding. He had them arrested and confiscated documents that served as evidence of communist maneuvering, among them secret directives. Zhang had 20 CCP members, including Li Dazhao, executed. It became increasingly clear that the events in Nanjing were part of Stalin's plan to communize the world. In Shanghai, too, the communist Shanghai Civil Government was established upon Borodin's advice. The CCP's politics of terror had been set in motion. Chiang Kai-shek's anticommunist sentiments had solidified. On April 12 he conducted a huge anti-CCP purge, and immediately proceeded to establish a government in Nanjing.

In February of the same year, the left wing of the GMD and the CCP had set up a communist government in Wuhan. Moscow was thrilled by this development, but this change of government produced a communist Wuhan government at the middle reaches of the Yangzi and an anti-communist government in Nanjing at its lower reaches. To these we must add Zhang Zuolin's Beijing government; China now had three competing governments. In what other nation would one find a situation like that? This chaotic disunity offered vivid evidence that the hopes for China expressed at the Washington Conference were nothing but a fantasy.

Chiang Kai-shek's April 12 Purge in Shanghai shocked the Comintern, which in the following month issued a directive referred to as the May Instructions. They ordered the CCP to move forward with radical agrarian revolution and land reform. Their main points were: (1) arm workers

[13] Chen Boda, *Renmin gongdi Jiang Jieshi* (Chiang Kai-shek: enemy of the people) (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 1954).

and peasants, destroy Chiang Kai-shek, and when the time is right, defeat his army; and (3) establish secret CCP organizations within labor unions and peasant associations.

These Comintern directives encouraged the communist radicals, and enlivened the peasant movement in Hunan. But they also increased wariness toward the left-wing members of the GMD in Wuhan. In the midst of all this, a situation arose that utterly astonished the left wing of the GMD in Wuhan. In early June the Comintern sent a secret telegram based on the May Instructions to Manabendra Roy, a leading Indian communist operating in Hankou at that time, ordering him to organize an armed peasant uprising. Roy showed the telegram to Wang Jingwei. Its key points were:

(1) The masses must seize land at once; do not wait for orders from the GMD or the Wuhan government.
(2) Form an army of 20,000 CCP members from Hubei and Hunan, as well as one of 50,000 peasants and workers, to replace the NRA.[14]
(3) Dispose of reactionary elements in the CCP's Central Committee; replace them with heads of peasant associations and labor unions.
(4) Establish a revolutionary court and put reactionary officers on trial there.[15]

Borodin attempted to move forward with covert operations, but they were unsuited to conditions in China. Roy, who was blind to the fact that the communists in Wuhan were losing their stature, showed the secret telegram (unofficially) to Wang who, along with his leftist cronies in the GMD, was dumbfounded by its contents. Now, at long last, they had finally awakened to the fact that what the CCP was planning not the realization of the Three Principles of the People, but a communist revolution.

United Front disintegrates

In July 1927 the Wuhan government announced that the United Front had been dissolved. Cooperation with the CCP ceased, and Borodin and his staff of Soviet political and military advisers were sent packing.

The separation between the GMD and the CCP was now complete, with both entities' revealing their true colors. An alliance that had endured for three years and seven months, since January of 1924, had come to an end. For the GMD, joining forces with the Soviet Union and tolerating communism were means to an end: the revolution they desired. And for the CCP, collaboration with the GMD was a step toward the communization of China. As long as the CCP was weak, the party would exploit even an antagonistic entity, when convenient. It would make a concerted effort

[14] However, we find "Mobilize about 20,000 Communists, add about 20,000 revolutionary workers and peasants from Hunan and Hubei, form several new army corps, use the students at the officers' school as commanders and organize your own reliable army before it is too late" in Joseph Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question* (Paris: Foreign Languages Press, 2021), 247; https://foreignlanguages.press/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/C28-Marxism-and-the-National-and-Colonial-Question-1st-Printing.pdf.

[15] Robert C. North & Xenia J. Eudin, *M.N. Roy's Mission to China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 106-7; https://archive.org/details/mnroysmissiontoc0000robe/page/n7/mode/2up.

to strengthen itself, and when it had acquired sufficient power, destroy the enemy and bring about a communist revolution. This has been the communist *modus operandi* throughout history. We can safely say that during the United Front, CCP conspiracies took advantage of Sun Yat-sen's goodwill and optimism. The eventual dissolution of the alliance was to be expected, as the two parties were completely incompatible.

By bidding farewell to the CCP, the Wuhan government eliminated a major cause of conflict with Nanjing. Wuhan government leader Wang Jingwei proposed uniting the two governments, and in response Chiang Kai-shek, head of the Nanjing government, consented and announced the merger.

On September 6, an agreement was signed, and two GMD governments became one, with its seat in Nanjing.

CHAPTER 9: CONTENDING WITH ATTEMPTS TO COMMUNIZE CHINA

2. SHIDEHARA'S IDEALISTIC DIPLOMACY VS. REALITY

Ineffective, irresponsible diplomacy

Diplomacy, as exercised by Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō (or Shidehara diplomacy, as it is referred to today), associated with non-intervention in China and international cooperation, tends to be widely described as representative of 1920s pacificism in Japan. Shidehara served two terms as foreign minister, the first lasting from June 1924 to April 1927, and the second from July 1929 to December 1931. Here is how Shidehara himself described the basis of his foreign policy:

> Today we may acknowledge that, in general, the hearts and minds of the people of the world are rejecting narrow-minded, exclusionist, and self-serving policies. They are opposed to the abuse of military might. They repudiate aggression, preferring that international problems be resolved through understanding and cooperation among the relevant nations. (…) I am confident that the age of international strife has finally come to an end, and that it shall be superseded by an age of international cooperation. (…) The genuine and permanent interests of a nation can be ensured through equitable harmony between the positions of the relevant nations. Our diplomatic relations with all nations shall be governed by this conviction.[1]

This could be interpreted as confidence in human goodwill and rationalism. When it takes the form of a specific foreign policy involving China, this conviction becomes, "We shall respect China's rational stance, and at the same time, we shall be prepared to protect our own rational stance. Translation: "We have no intention of interfering in any way whatsoever with Chinese domestic policy."

About the chaos and disunity pervading China, Shidehara remarked, "The mission of uniting China will not be easily accomplished. Although the results of that undertaking have not been satisfactory, it would be mistaken to conclude immediately that the Chinese national character is not suited to self-government." Shidehara believed that the Chinese were indeed capable of self-government. About Chinese communism, he said, "There seems to be some speculation in the world about China's becoming a communist nation, and that the Chinese are planning to abrogate international treaties that they believe are disadvantageous to China. But I place no faith in such conjectures. We must closely watch, always with hope and patience, the efforts of the Chinese people toward political reform. In other words, while asserting our rightful interests in China, we shall give ample, sympathetic consideration to the special situation in China. We shall also endeavor to devise means to foster spiritual, cultural, and economic collaboration and cooperation between Japan and China."

[1] Speech delivered at 50th session of Japanese Diet on January 22, 1925 in *Gaimushō* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), ed., *Nihon gaikō nenpyō narabi ni shuyō bunsho* (Chronology and important papers on Japanese Diplomacy), vol. 2 (Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1965).

Shidehara was dispelling anxiety about the communization of China, and at the same time, rejecting the possibility that China might unilaterally abrogate unequal treaties.

Such optimism! Such magnanimity toward China! But every single one of Shidehara's predictions missed its mark, and his trust in China was completely betrayed.

Shidehara's installation as foreign minister coincided with the enactment of the anti-Japanese immigration law in the US. His comment at the time was, "When all is said and done, we have no choice but to wait for the people of the United States to arrive at a reasonable understanding of our people and our assertions. Neither rash outbursts nor emotionally charged tirades will engender international understanding. I am convinced that the love of justice, the very spirit that resided in the hearts of Americans when the United States was founded, remains within them. It is my hope that the time will come when this fact is proven." In other words, he truly believed that the American love of justice would resolve the problem.

Here we have the fundamental spirit governing Shidehara diplomacy in the foreign minister's own words. It is a profession of faith in what is rational, in what is just, the sort of utterance we would expect from a martyr. At the same time, it is a demonstration of absolute trust in innate human goodness, which offers us a glimpse into Taishō democracy.

When the Nanjing Incident occurred, Shidehara opposed the use of any military force. He clung to that stance, subscribing to a policy of absolute non-interference, which differed from that adopted by the UK, US, and other nations. Shidehara decided that since the communists were scheming to use the Nanjing Incident to foil Chiang's plans and ruin him, "at this time the best policy for the nations involved to adopt is to leave it to the Chinese to maintain public order in China. We should allow the healthy elements of the NRA who, although not without flaws, are at the center of control, an opportunity to stabilize the situation." He believed that Japan, with 2,000 of its citizens, six consulates and branch consulates on the upper reaches of the Yangzi, could not immediately resort to measures as strong as those taken by the British. As far as it goes, his position seems reasonable.

Not long after the incident, John Tilley, British ambassador to Japan, asked Shidehara whether Japan had any intention of providing material assistance to Chiang Kai-shek and his moderate followers. Shidehara replied in the negative, saying that doing so would result in Chiang's being branded a traitor, thus placing him in an even more difficult position. But at that time communist elements in the NRA were engaging in anti-Chiang and anti-foreign activities ordered and supported by the USSR. Consequently Shidehara's reluctance to support Chiang was tantamount to abandoning the fight against communist forces, and meant that his diplomacy was both ineffective and irresponsible. When Tilley pressed Shidehara, asking what he would do if radical communism spread throughout all of China. Shidehara's response was, "I do not believe that communism will permeate all of China. But even if the communists do gain control of China … we have little to fear. Regardless of the outcome of the Chinese situation, other nations will have no choice but to stand by and wait patiently for whatever form it takes." Such a rosy view of communism! Shidehara was personally opposed to communism, but he comforted himself by theorizing that it must have some favorable aspect, however minuscule. By closing his eyes to the dangers of communism, he thought he was in keeping with the progressive trend of the time. When

I contemplate the how communism in China grew more and more virulent, the error of Shidehara's assumption becomes all too clear.

Shidehara said the use of force would not inflict mortal wounds on China. Rather, the nations using it would suffer in a conflict with China. He also advocated support for Chiang Kai-shek and his moderate followers. Shidehara's theories about China were by no means completely without merit. Unfortunately, he made no effort to connect them to reality, or to put them into practice. I have already mentioned that Shidehara professed great understanding of and sympathy for China in connection with unequal tariffs at the Special Conference on the Chinese Customs Tariff in Beijing (1925-26) to the point of neglecting to reach an accord with the other powers. But China repaid Japan with atrocities, i.e., the Nanjing Incident. Shidehara should have had some insight into the chaos and disorder in China, but he did not identify the source of the unrest there: the communist forces. Accordingly, his idealistic peace diplomacy was far removed from reality and, ultimately, his lofty arguments resulted only in inaction and irresponsibility.

Another incident arose that seemed to mock Shidehara's appeasement policy. It unfolded at about 2:00 p.m. on April 3, 1927 in the Japanese concession in Hankou, near the Naniwa Restaurant, a canteen catering to military personnel. Apparently Chinese children threw stones at Japanese sailors on shore leave. When the sailors scolded them, an argument ensued. A mob of Chinese surrounded Japanese sailors inside the Naniwa Restaurant and began assaulting them. A growing crowd of Chinese chased the sailors and destroyed the house where they had sought refuge. Before even 10 minutes had elapsed, the Chinese began attacking Japanese civilians. They vandalized and looted Japanese shops, the Dōjin Hospital, and the Heigan Temple. Vice-consul Tanaka Masakazu, who had rushed to the scene, was assaulted as well. The Japanese concession was now in total chaos.[2]

Witnesses reported that the attacks on the Japanese concession seemed to have been planned in advance by the communist-controlled ACFTU (All-China Federation of Trade Unions). Several days before the incident erupted, there were signs of Chinese attempting to start trouble in various locations. On April 3 messengers were seen running about, and soon a mob burst into the Japanese concession. Li Lisan and Xiang Zhongfa of the ACFTU were spotted riding around on trucks, directing the violence. There were approximately 2,200 Japanese nationals in Hankou at the time. Out of concern for their lives and safety, a 200-man naval landing party came ashore and eventually fired several dozens of shots, aiming at the ground, which dispersed the crowd. Two people were wounded during the fray. Later the Japanese concession was surrounded by barbed wire and sandbags for protection, and order outside the concession was maintained by Chinese troops. The landing party had swelled to about 500 men by the time the incident ended. All Japanese residents outside the concession were rescued, and the six Japanese sailors detained by the Chinese were released. Subsequently most of the 2,200 Japanese residing in Hankou withdrew to Shanghai or Japan.

Peace was restored within a few days. But given growing anti-Japanese public opinion, Japanese nationals whose presence in Hankou was not essential began departing from Nanjing, Wuhu,

[2] Usui 1971, *op. cit.*

Jiujiang, Shashi, Chongqing, Chengdu, and other locations on the middle reaches of the Yangzi, bound for Shanghai or Japan.

The safety of Japanese residents of Hankou and the integrity of the Japanese concession were narrowly secured by the machine guns of the naval landing party. Subsequently anti-Japanese sentiment among the Chinese rose. But in light of the turbulent situation in China, which gave rise to the usurpation of British concessions at Hankou and Jiujiang, as well as the Nanjing Incident, the Japanese response was an unavoidable and necessary one. Chinese communists and insurgents, aware of Japan's non-interventionist policy, may have planned the Hankou Incident under the assumption that Japan would take no action. Nevertheless, to avoid a recurrence of the Nanjing Incident, Japan wisely used force to ensure the safety of Japanese citizens in the Hankou Incident.

Shidehara's stance inhibits Anglo-Japanese cooperation

The NRA's use of military force against the British concessions in Hankou and Jiujiang in January 1927 awakened the Japanese to the necessity of a partnership with the UK. Former Prime Minister Kiyoura Keigo, for instance, emphasized the importance of international cooperation. He argued that malevolent Russian forces were responsible for the Hankou Incident, and that the real source of chaos was a breakdown in cooperation between leading nations.[3] There were indications in 1925, when the Special Conference on the Chinese Customs Tariff took place in Beijing, that the British were interested in a partnership with Japan as well. Sir Charles Eliot, British ambassador to Japan at the time, submitted a report stating that if the British properly appraised the danger of Soviet activity in the East and West, "[s]o far as the East is concerned I personally feel that it is to our advantage to work with Japan rather than with the United States … .[4]" His remarks are said to have made a strong impression on King George V.[5]

The Four-Power Treaty, a product of the Washington Naval Conference, sounded the death knell of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. A few more years brought the threat of communism to the fore, and with it, advocacy of a strong need for a new Anglo-Japanese partnership.

In December 1925 British officials expressed an interest in cooperating with Japan in China. Though the Japanese Army was of the same mind, Shidehara seemed indifferent to the idea. Finding Shidehara's stance formidable and dangerous, Eliot was more perplexed than surprised. He believed that Shidehara embodied the peaceful indications shown in Japan's withdrawal from Shandong, northern Karafuto (Sakhalin), and eastern Siberia, and suggested that whatever Japan had once been, it was now a weak nation. Eliot stated further that this cowardice, this inability to act on the ambition to become a great power, "has introduced a sort of duality and inconsistency,

[3] Hosoya Chihiro, *Washinton taisei no tokushitsu to hen'yō* (The nature and transformation of the Washington System) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1988).

[4] Dennis Smith, "Sir Charles Eliot (1862-1931) and Japan" in Sir Hugh Cortazzi and Gordon Daniels, ed., *Britain and Japan 1859-1991: Themes and Personalities* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), 195.

[5] Lloyd C. Gardner, "Kyokutō kokusai seiji to Ei-Bei kankei" (Far Eastern international politics and Anglo-American relations) in Hosoya Chihiro and Saitō Makoto, ed., *Washinton Taisei to Nichibei kankei* (The Washington System and Japanese-American Relations) (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1978).

if not insincerity, into Japan's foreign policy." Eliot predicted that rather than breaking with the Western powers over China, Japan would continue to make concessions to the Chinese. He was disheartened by Shidehara's weak diplomacy toward China and the Soviet Union.[6]

In July 1926, at around the time of the Northern Expedition, Sir William Tyrrell, permanent British secretary for foreign affairs, said that the British government was working to achieve peace and prosperity throughout the world. He believed that, in contrast, the Soviet Union, with its relentless anti-British propaganda, was promoting disorder throughout the world. Tyrrell was opposed to renewing the alliance, stating that the best possible solution in the Far East — reviving the Anglo-Japanese Alliance – was unfortunately closed off due to the new anti-militaristic and democratic spirit in Japan.

These opinions from British diplomatic sources seem to demonstrate that even a year or more prior to the Nanjing Incident, the British had begun to distrust Shidehara's diplomacy, and had come to the conclusion that it was hindering Anglo-Japanese cooperation on China. When the Nanjing Incident occurred, the UK and the Japanese Army both believed that it was necessary for the powers to take joint action against China. However, Shidehara's stance was close to the US policy of non-intervention in China, and needless to say, this was a position that would inhibit Anglo-Japanese cooperation.

Suppose that it was indeed Shidehara diplomacy that prevented the revival of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance at a time when both nations hoped for it, even though neither actually proposed it. And suppose Shidehara diplomacy itself lacked the forcefulness to resolve the China problem. Where, then, should we expect to find the *raison d'être* of Shidehara diplomacy? In any case, it was just a matter of time before Shidehara's foreign policy would become the target of public censure.

Shidehara diplomacy comes to an end

In the wake of successive unfortunate events in Nanjing and Hankou, public opinion grew more and more critical of Shidehara diplomacy. Even *Asahi Shinbun*, then considered Japan's most progressive daily, pointed out the failings of government policies intended to protect Japanese residents of China. The newspaper carried an editorial on April 5, 1927, an excerpt from which follows:

> We are warning China to weigh her actions carefully. We issue the same warning to Foreign Minister Shidehara, who is not doing what should be done, who is not exhausting every possibility, but is instead "keeping close watch on the situation."

All Japan's newspapers reproved Shidehara for his inaction in connection with the two incidents.

[6] James B. Crowley, "Nichi-Ei kyōchō e no mosaku" (The pursuit of Anglo-Japanese cooperation) in Hosoya Chihiro and Saitō Makoto, ed., *Washinton Taisei to Nichibei kankei* (The Washington System and Japanese-American Relations) (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1978).

On April 13, 1927 the Wakatsuki Cabinet submitted a proposal to the Privy Council for the issuance of an emergency decree to rescue the Taiwan Bank. At a plenary session of the council on April 17 aspersions were cast on the manner in which diplomacy with China was being conducted. The emergency decree proposal was rejected on constitutional grounds, forcing the Wakatsuki Cabinet to resign *en masse* on the same day. The Privy Council's opposition to the proposal was simply a means to an end: to topple a government because of its feeble diplomacy. The mandate to form the next cabinet fell to Tanaka Giichi, the leader of the Seiyukai, one of the main political parties; he was also a general in the Japanese Army.

Incautiously optimistic about communism

Ujita Naoyoshi, who wrote a biography of Shidehara, appraises his diplomacy as follows.

> Shidehara's diplomacy with China did not take into account the fact that the NRA was turning communist. He was wont to approach diplomacy with a spirit of compassion and tolerance. Therefore, when confronted with the Shanghai, Nanjing, and Hankou incidents, Foreign Minister Shidehara adopted an attitude that more closely resembled acquiescence than a non-interventionist stance. This caused great anxiety and dissatisfaction in the upper echelons of Japanese politics and the military, and caused confidence in Shidehara diplomacy to plummet.
>
> (…)
>
> The ideas embodied in Shidehara diplomacy are generally accepted or even lauded by those who concern themselves with diplomacy and international problems. However, no matter from what perspective one examines his views on the CCP, it is impossible to agree with them. Moreover, the consequences of his diplomacy could in no way be described as beneficial, either to Japan or to Shidehara himself. He was again appointed foreign minister when the second Wakatsuki Cabinet took office. Shidehara failed to achieve his diplomatic objectives during his dealings with the revolutionary diplomacy of the GMD largely because he failed to familiarize himself sufficiently with the CCP. His failure tells us that his powers of discernment were not entirely accurate. Was that the only flaw in Shidehara diplomacy? No, there is another that must be mentioned. Because Shidehara placed an inordinate amount of confidence in his own opinions, and was overly quick to promote principles and neglect practical problems, and because he was extremely idealistic and dogmatic, he lacked the political sense to perceive the current reality and the trends in public sentiment, and then take appropriate measures. Consequently, he was unable to reconcile his own principles with pressing demands. Moreover, overconfidence often drove him to challenge the trends of the times more than necessary, thus intensifying the current of opposition against him. This was, in fact, a major flaw that obstructed the furtherance of Shidehara diplomacy.[7]

Ujita's scalpel exposes, with finesse, the problems plaguing Shidehara's personality and diplomacy.

[7] Ujita Naoyoshi, *Shidehara Kijūrō* (Tokyo: Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1958).

3. TANAKA DIPLOMACY'S RESPONSE TO THE NORTHERN EXPEDITION

First Shandong Expedition

Prime Minister Tanaka Giichi's cabinet took office on April 20, 1927. Tanaka, serving concurrently as foreign minister, announced his administration's policy guidelines on April 22 for both domestic and foreign consumption. According to those guidelines, the Japanese government was prepared to offer empathy and support to China, but would need to give due consideration to the procedures and methods used to satisfy the requirements of the Chinese people. They state that Japan was fully committed to the achievement of world peace, at the same time emphasizing the importance of Japan's keeping abreast of developments in the CCP, and cooperating with other nations if necessary. Aside from the reference to communism, Tanaka's guidelines were not radically different from the philosophy underpinning Shidehara diplomacy.

Both in Japan and abroad there were hopes (and in some cases, fears) that Japan's China policy would change with the new administration. Historian Iriye Akira commented on the matter as follows:

> It is evident that for a month after he came to power Tanaka faithfully followed his predecessor's China policy. They shared an image of a new era based on solid understanding between Japan and China. The existence of Chinese radicals was an obstacle to this scheme, and both Shidehara and Tanaka did all they could to support any movement against them. But even Tanaka could not keep up with the rapidly changing developments of events in China, and these in time caused him to depart in certain respects from the policies formulated by Shidehara.[1]

As Prof. Iriye indicates, there was no deceit in Tanaka's policies. When he said that he cared about and wanted to help China, he meant every word, and his desire for world peace was no less fervent. All those sentiments are communicated to us through his words, actions, and policies. However, the way in which conditions in China evolved was harsh and tragic, without regard for Tanaka's hopes and ideals.

In the meantime, the strife between north and south in our neighboring nation continued to intensify. As the NRA advanced northward, the irresistible force of Chiang's army's put a damper on the prospects of the northern armies, which worsened day by day, with retreat after retreat.

At the time the prime minister was optimistic, believing that a compromise between the northern and southern forces might be possible, since Chiang's army seemed likely to defeat the communists in Wuhan. But Tanaka changed his mind when the Shandong army was defeated along the Tianjin-Pukou Railway, the Fengtian army suffered an even worse defeat along the Beijing-Hankou Railway, and a crisis was imminent in Jinan and locations in the Beijing-Tianjin area. The prime minister realized that he would have to dispatch troops to protect Japanese civilians.

[1] Iriye, *op. cit.*, 144-45.

At the time there were approximately 24,000 Japanese civilians in China: 1,233 in Jinan, 6,746 in Tianjin, 1,586 in Beijing, and 13,621 in Qingdao. Total Japanese investment amounted to approximately ¥200 million.

On May 30 the First Shandong Expedition, comprising approximately 2,000 members of the 33rd Infantry Brigade (four battalions) under the 10th Division based in Port Arthur, departed from Dalian, landing in Qingdao on June 1. The Japanese government had announced that it would immediately withdraw its troops once it had ascertained that there was no longer a threat to Japanese citizens in China.

There were strong objections to the dispatching of Japanese troops from the Beijing, Wuhan, and Nanjing governments. But ironically, Chinese residents of the Shandong area welcomed the Japanese presence, since it enabled them to avoid being caught up in the ravages of warfare. In contrast, in south China, far away from Shandong, along the Yangzi, the boycott of Japanese goods was in full force, abetted and encouraged by the Nanjing government.

The notable liberal foreign policy commentator Kiyosawa Kiyoshi wrote the following about the protests from the Beijing, Nanjing, and Hankou governments as follows:

> All of these protests from China's governments were unreasonable, rooted as they were in the notion that the dispatching of Japanese troops violated both Chinese sovereignty and international law. At that time, we were at a loss as to how the sovereignty of a nation from which three protests emanated simultaneously could be violated. (…) Is international law based upon the premise that every nation has three institutions claiming to be legitimate governments? Our minds, unaccustomed to diplomatic debate, were utterly unable to negotiate that labyrinth.[2]

Perhaps it is possible to interpret these remarks as a lament for the unusual situation in China, where warlords and the CCP, both in disarray, were vying for supremacy, and where there was no responsible, unified government. Under those circumstances international law could not possibly be applied to China.

Since Chiang's NRA had suffered serious defeats at the hands of northern forces, his status plummeted. Because he announced his resignation on August 14, the Northern Expedition was suspended, and the threat to the Shandong area eliminated.

In early September the Japanese government decided that there was no longer a need to station troops in Shandong, and as had previously been announced, withdrew its troops. The speedy departure was met with praise for Japan.

Even China appreciates Japan's Eastern Conference

When Tanaka formed his Cabinet, he had received special instructions from the Emperor to conduct diplomacy with caution and prudence. Perhaps because of those instructions, the prime minister personally assumed the role of foreign minister. Tanaka decided to summon Japanese

[2] *Chūō Kōron*, July 1927.

officials assigned to China to Tokyo for a major liaison conference. Those men would work together with central government officials to formulate a China policy. That gathering became known as the Eastern Conference.

Since Tanaka had taken charge of national policy when Shidehara diplomacy failed, it was his duty to hold a conference to reexamine the situation in China and design an appropriate diplomatic approach. The prime minister's swift, decisive action was indeed commendable.

The conference was held from June 27 to July 7, 1927. In attendance from the central government were Tanaka Giichi, prime minister and foreign minister; Mori Kaku, parliamentary vice-minister for foreign affairs; Debuchi Katsuji, vice-minister for foreign affairs, and five other Foreign Ministry bureaucrats. Representing the Army were Hata Shunroku, parliamentary vice-minister of the Army and three others. Representing the Navy were Ōsumi Mineo, parliamentary vice-minister of the Navy and two others. Officials serving in China who attended the conference were Yoshizawa Kenkichi, minister to China; Yoshida Shigeru, consul general in Fengtian; Takao Tōru, consul general in Hankou; Yada Shichitarō, consul general in Shanghai; Kodama Hideo, governor of the Guandong Leased Territory; Mutō Nobuyoshi, commander in chief of the Guandong Army; and Asari Saburō, director of the Police Affairs Bureau, Government-General of Korea.

The conference included approximately five plenary sessions, during which reports and opinions concerning the political situation in various parts of China were presented by China-based officials as well as representatives of Japan's central government. Also discussed were problems relating to Manchuria and Mongolia, the revival of Japanese commercial activity in the Yangzi region, relief measures for Japanese residents who had been uprooted, and the amendment of the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation (concluded in 1896), as well as violations of that treaty. On July 7, the last day of the conference, Tanaka produced his Overview of China Policy, which was distributed in Japan and abroad. Its essential points follow.

(1) As far as the domestic conflict in China is concerned, we shall respect the will of the Chinese people, rather than favoring any one party or faction.
(2) We shall cooperate wholeheartedly with legitimate national demands from moderate elements in China.
(3) The position of the Japanese government regarding each of the Chinese governments shall be exactly the same; in the event that there is progress toward the establishment of a common government, we shall welcome and support that progress.
(4) In the event that Japan's rights and interests in China, and the lives and property of Japanese residents of China are unlawfully compromised, we reserve the right to take robust defensive action.
(5) Manchuria and Mongolia, especially the three eastern provinces (Manchuria), are of great importance to Japan from the standpoint of our national defense and survival. We believe that these regions require special consideration from Japan, and that it is our responsibility as a neighboring nation to ensure that both nationals and foreigners can live peacefully in those regions. We shall promote the economic activity of both nationals and foreigners in Manchuria and Mongolia in accordance with the principles of the Open Door Policy and equal opportunity.

(6) We shall support influential individuals in the three eastern provinces who respect our special status in Manchuria and Mongolia, and who make sincere efforts to stabilize the political situation there.
(7) In the unlikely event that unrest spreads to Manchuria and Mongolia, and Japan's special rights and interests in the region are likely to be compromised, regardless of whence the threat emanates, we must be prepared to take appropriate steps immediately to protect said special rights and interests, and ensure that the affected regions remain places where nationals and foreigners can live and prosper in peace.

Vice-minister Mori provided an explication of the aforementioned overview. For instance, in connection with (5), he stated that Japan would not adopt a closed policy in Manchuria and Mongolia, but rather "shall welcome foreigners, including citizens of the UK, the US, France, and even Russia to invest in Manchuria and Mongolia in the spirit of the Open Door Policy and equal opportunity. In other words, I would like Manchuria and Mongolia to become the most peaceful places in all of China. Recently I encouraged the Russian ambassador to apply these principles to Siberia as well." Mori's comment to the effect that Tanaka was not implying that Japan had exclusive rights in Manchuria or Mongolia, but that both regions should be opened, even to Russia, is noteworthy.

Furthermore, regarding (6), which discusses supporting influential persons in the three eastern provinces, Mori stated, "If Zhang Zuolin returns to the three eastern provinces to protect the territory and ensure peace, we shall, of course, support him. Moreover, should another individual govern the three eastern provinces, and do so in a manner consistent with our principles and policies, we should support that individual. In summary, the language of the overview is not intended to support Zhang Zuolin or to reject him. Our actions shall be guided by our own, independent position." Mori was saying that from an impartial and nonpartisan stance, Japan would welcome and support anyone who administers the three eastern provinces, provided that that individual thought along the same lines as Japan, pursued economic development, maintained order, strove to achieve political stability, and practiced equal opportunity.

Up to a point, the conclusions reached by the Eastern Conference, as far as China proper was concerned, were in keeping with policies favored by Shidehara. The basic policy, i.e., respecting the will of the Chinese people and empathizing with their needs, supporting moderate elements, and encouraging the development of a unified government does not budge an inch from Shidehara diplomacy. But the latter part of the Overview of China Policy states that resolute defensive measures would be taken against transgressions by communist elements against Japanese interests in China and the lives and property of Japanese nationals. It also stated that if the unrest spread to Manchuria and Mongolia, and Japan's special status and interests were threatened, Japan would not hesitate to protect them. This portion certainly differed from Shidehara's passive, ineffective policies, and probably gave rise to the term "assertive Tanaka diplomacy."

However, these arguments about defending Japanese interests in China, and the special status of Manchuria and Mongolia, were reasonable ones to broach when we recall the deleterious effects of inaction and passivity on Japanese interests in China, and on the safety of Japanese citizens during the era of Shidehara diplomacy. This was certainly not a sudden adoption on Tanaka's part of a new "assertive" policy that completely departed from Shidehara diplomacy.

After the Eastern Conference ended Yoshizawa Kenkichi, minister to China, stopped in Nanjing prior to returning to his base in Beijing. The first foreign diplomat to visit the region following the GMD's taking of Beijing, Yoshizawa received a warm welcome from the Foreign Affairs Department and General Headquarters. In a speech Hu Hanmin, head of the GMD Legislative Yuan, said that he welcomed the China policy adopted by the Eastern Conference.

For that very reason, I feel no need to comment on the extent to which the account describing the expedition to Shandong and the Eastern Conference in Japanese history textbooks deviates from the truth.

> In April 1927 the Nationalist Party, led by Chiang Kai-shek, established a Nationalist government in Nanjing, and escalated its Northern Expedition, an effort to unite China through the conquest of the northern warlords. The Tanaka Cabinet, fearing that the unification of China might result in Japan's losing its interests in Manchuria and Mongolia, sent an expedition to Shandong on the pretext of protecting Japanese citizens in that region, plotted to use military force to interfere in the Northern Expedition, and convened the Eastern Conference, where the decision to adopt an uncompromising diplomatic policy was made.[3]

[3] *Kaitei Nihonshi* (Japanese history: revised edition) (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 1989).

4. THE TANAKA MEMORIAL HOAX

Fabrication of a historical document

Because of its connection with the Eastern Conference, I would like to discuss a mysterious document that was widely circulated, even making an appearance at the IMTFE (Tokyo Trial), held after the Greater East Asian War had ended. The document is also known as the "Tanaka Memorandum," but is most often referred to as the "Tanaka Memorial." It is said to elaborate on decisions made at the Eastern Conference, and was supposedly written by Prime Minister Tanaka Giichi and secretly submitted to Emperor Shōwa. Along with the memorial, entitled "Assertive Policies Toward Manchuria and Mongolia," Tanaka is said to have delivered another document entitled "Fundamental Assertive Imperial Policies Concerning Manchuria and Mongolia" to Imperial Household Minister Ichiki Kitokurō on July 25, 1927.

This mysterious document became known to the world in December 1929, more than two years after it was purportedly written. It appeared in *Current Affairs Monthly*,[1] a magazine published in Nanjing, in Chinese, and subsequently metamorphosed into an English-language pamphlet, which was disseminated all over the world. The memorial made its rounds to China, Europe, and the US, in both Chinese and English. One would expect to find the original Japanese text of any memorial to the Emperor, even a draft, but no trace of the document in question has ever been found. Accordingly, it was suspect from the outset, but since it was promoted, time and again, as the consummate anti-Japanese resource, it took on a life of its own, acquiring historical gravitas.[2] It is eerily similar to another phenomenon, the manufactured "Nanking massacre" with its imaginary 300,000 victims, and which, propelled by worldwide Chinese propaganda, has become firmly established in people's minds as historical fact.

Memorial finally appears in Japanese

The first Japanese translation of the Tanaka Memorial was published in 1930, the year after its appearance in Chinese. Entitled "Japan's Policy Toward Manchuria and Mongolia in the Eyes of the Chinese," it was issued by the Nikka (Japan-China) Club. The translation was based on the version carried by the aforementioned *Current Affairs Monthly* under the title "Shocking Japanese Policy Concerning Manchuria and Mongolia: The Tanaka Memorial."

There is one other Japanese-language version, entitled *Japanese Imperialist Conspiracy: Translation of Memorial on Invasion of Manchuria in Its Entirety Submitted by Prime Minister Tanaka Giichi to the Emperor of Japan*. It was published in 1946 by Iskra, a company operating under the auspices of the Comintern.[3] This version was represented as a reprint of a translation, done by the JCP (Japanese Communist Party) in 1931 or 1932, of an article in the December 1931

[1] *Shishi yuebao* (Current affairs monthly), vol. 1, No. 2 (1929).

[2] Inō Tentarō, "'Tanaka jōsōbun' wo meguru ni san no mondai" (Several problems relating to the "Tanaka Memorial") in *Kokusai seiji* (International politics) 26 (1964).

[3] https://dl.ndl.go.jp/api/iiif/1445068/R0000002/full/full/0/default.jpg.

issue of *Communist International*.[4] (The memorial that appeared in *Communist International* was written in English, and was the same version published in English in the *China Critic*.)[5]

"Positive" policy toward Manchuria and Mongolia

What sort of contrivance was the Tanaka Memorial? I shall provide a summary, using excerpts for illustration. The memorial commences as follows:

> THE TANAKA MEMORIAL
>
> Memorial Presented to the Emperor of
> Japan on July 25, 1927
> By Premier Tanaka,
> Outlining the Positive Policy in Manchuria
>
> The term Manchuria and Mongolia includes the provinces Fengtien [Fengtian], Kirin [Jilin], Heilungkiang [Heilongjiang] and Outer and Inner Mongolia. It extends an area of 74,000 square miles, having a population of 28,000,000 people. … [I]ts wealth of forestry, minerals and agricultural products is also unrivaled elsewhere in the world. In order to exploit these resources for the perpetuation of our national glory, we created especially the South Manchuria Railway Company.
>
> The total investment involved in our undertakings in railway, shipping, mining, forestry, steel manufacture, agriculture, and in cattle raising, as schemes pretending to be mutually beneficial to China and Japan, amount to no less than Yen 440,000,000. It is veritably the largest single investment and the strongest organization of our country. (…) In so far as the South Manchuria Railway Company is empowered to undertake diplomatic, police, and ordinary administrative functions so that it may *carry out our imperialistic policies* [italics supplied], the Company forms a peculiar organization which has exactly the same powers as the Governor-General of Korea.
>
> (…)
>
> It will be recalled that when the Nine Power Treaty was signed which restricted our movements in Manchuria and Mongolia, public opinion was greatly aroused. The late Emperor Taisho called a conference of *Yamagata and other high officers of the army and navy to find a way to counteract this new engagement* [italics supplied]. I was sent to Europe and America to ascertain secretly the attitude of the important statesmen toward it.
>
> (…)

[4] "Japanese Imperialism in All Its Insolent Nakedness," *Communist International*, vol. VIII, No. 22, 30 December 1931, 731-748; https://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/ci/vol-8/v08-n22-dec-30-1931-CI-riaz-orig.pdf.

[5] *China Critic*, 24 September 1931, vol. 4, no. 29, 923-34.

> After I had secretly exchanged views with the Powers regarding the development of Manchuria and Mongolia, I returned by way of Shanghai. At the wharf there *a Chinese* [italics supplied] attempted to take my life. An American woman was hurt, but I escaped by the divine protection of my emperors of the past. It seems that it was by divine will … .
>
> (…)
>
> The Three Eastern Provinces are politically the imperfect spot in the Far East. For the sake of self-protection as well as the protection of others, Japan cannot remove the difficulties in Eastern Asia unless she adopts a policy of "Blood and Iron." But in carrying out this policy we have to face the United States which has been turned against us by China's policy of fighting poison with poison. … But in order to conquer China we must first conquer Manchuria and Mongolia. In order to conquer the world, we must first conquer China. If we succeed in conquering China, the rest of the Asiatic countries and the South Sea countries will fear us and surrender to us. Then the world will realize that Eastern Asia is ours and will not dare to violate our rights. This is the plan left to us by Emperor Meiji, the success of which is essential to our national existence.
>
> The way to gain actual rights in Manchuria and Mongolia is to use this region as a base and under the pretense of trade and commerce penetrate the rest of China. Armed by the rights already secured we shall seize the resources all over the country. Having China's entire resources at our disposal we shall proceed to conquer India, the Archipelago, Asia Minor, Central Asia, and even Europe. But to get control of Manchuria and Mongolia is the first step if the Yamato race wishes to distinguish themselves on Continental Asia.[6]

Bizarre Chinese logic

Was the Tanaka Memorial, which even made an appearance at the IMTFE, genuine or spurious? Qin Dechun, deputy commander of the 29th Army and mayor of Beijing when the Lugou Bridge Incident occurred, was a witness for the prosecution during that tribunal. Here is the exchange between the witness and defense attorney Hayashi Itsurō:

> Q: You have spoken of having seen the TANAKA Memorial. In what language was this so-called memorial written?
>
> A: What I saw was the Chinese translation.
>
> Q: Have you ever ascertained whether there was a Japanese text of this so-called memorial?
>
> A: I have not seen the original Japanese version of the memorandum.[7]

[6] Carl Crow, ed., *Japan's Dream of World Empire: The Tanaka Memorial* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942), 7-9.

[7] IMTFE, Cross-examination of Ching-teh Chun (Qin Dechun), witness for the prosecution, by Hayashi Itsurō on 24 July 1946, 2,460; https://archive.org/details/121.2193-2377/118.2931-2990/page/16/mode/2up?q=memorial.

Qin had begun to doubt the authenticity of the memorial, which he had been the first to mention.

> During further cross-examination on the following day, William Webb, president of the tribunal, interrupted the proceedings and asked if the witness had any confidence in the existence of the "Tanaka Memorial."
>
> A: I cannot prove that it is a true one, but at the same time I also have no means to disprove it. But as the development we have witnessed in the latter stages of Japanese aggression it seems to me that the author TANAKA had made himself a very good profit.

This testimony was revised by the monitor (language arbiter), whose responsibility was to correct translation errors.

> THE MONITOR: English supplements: If TANAKA Memorial was untrue, was cooked up, everything predicted in it has been carried out.[8]

Incidentally, when the League of Nations was debating the Manchurian Incident at the 69th session of the Council of the League of Nations in November 1932, Wellington Koo, a Chinese delegate, referred to the Tanaka Memorial. When Matsuoka Yōsuke, representing Japan, pressed Koo on the document's authenticity, the latter's argument was, "In my opinion, however, the best proof on this question is really the whole situation in Manchuria today."[9]

When it proved difficult to ascertain that the memorial existed, the Chinese resorted a bizarre logic that conflated the past and future. They insisted that the document was authentic on the basis of subsequent developments (which were, in fact, far removed from the content of the memorial) both at the time of the Manchurian Incident and at the IMTFE.

Evidence exposing memorial as a forgery

In February 1930, the Japanese Foreign Ministry, having concluded that the Tanaka Memorial was a fake, filed a protest to the Nationalist government. In June of the same year the Japan-China Club arrived at the same conclusion after having translated the memorial into Japanese. Later Hanabusa Nagamichi, Kiyosawa Kiyoshi, and other specialists in diplomatic history also adjudged the document spurious, as did Shigemitsu Mamoru, who was in the diplomatic service at the time the memorial was invented, and other Foreign Ministry officials as well.

---

[8] IMTFE, Interrogation of Ching-teh Chun (Qin Dechun), witness for the prosecution, by President William Webb on 25 July 1946, 2,515-2516; https://archive.org/details/121.2193-2377/119.12-82/mode/2up?q=tanaka.

[9] Westel W. Willoughby, *Japan's Case Examined* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1940), 164.

There is no shortage of reasons on which to base such a conclusion, but I would like to indicate several convincing examples, among which are portions of the text that are offset by italics.

(1) According to the memorial, Yamagata Aritomo attended a meeting convened in late November 1922 to find a solution to the problems posed by the Nine-Power Treaty. Yamagata died on February 1, 1922.
(2) According to the memorial, Tanaka Giichi was dispatched to Europe and the US. But in 1922 his only foreign destination was, in fact, the Philippines.
(3) The perpetrators of the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Tanaka Giichi in Shanghai were not Chinese, but Koreans.

The following items have no connection with passages italicized above.

(4) The Fengtian-Jilin Line, already in operation according to the memorial, was not completed until May 1929.
(5) Memorials were customarily not addressed to any individual, but rather delivered to the Emperor by the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal. The Tanaka Memorial is addressed to the Imperial Household Minister.

Even on the basis of factual and stylistic errors alone, the “Tanaka Memorial” is certainly a fake. Also suspicious are numerous awkward, peculiar or otherwise inappropriate turns of phrase. The writing style of the memorial lacks courtliness and humility to the extent that it seems irredeemably peculiar and foreign to the Japanese sensibility, and thus unacceptable as suitable phraseology for such a document. I am certain beyond any doubt that the original author was not Japanese. The forgery of the memorial should be viewed as a manifestation of the rampant Chinese tendency toward prevarication, and should serve as valuable evidence in any examination of the authenticity of the so-called Nanjing massacre.

5. JINAN INCIDENT

Tanaka and Chiang meet

As stated above, Chiang Kai-shek resigned from his position of NRA commander in chief in August 1927. In late September, he traveled to Japan, accompanied by his friend and adviser Zhang Qun. On November 5 the two men visited Prime Minister Tanaka at his residence in Aoyama, Tokyo. Their conversation lasted for about two hours, during which they discussed the following matters.

First, Tanaka urged Chiang to consolidate the region south of the Yangzi: "As long as that area remains ununified, the CCP will continue to grow. I would suggest consolidating the area south of the Yangzi, and waiting to set off on the Northern Expedition until you have established a stable base. This is a task you and only you can accomplish." As he offered advice to Chiang, Tanaka was also affirming his faith in the Chinese leader.

Tanaka continued: "Japan has greater interests in China than the other powers. Japan must not interfere in Chinese domestic strife, but it is extremely painful for us to stand by and watch while the CCP runs rampant over your country. If you, as an anti-communist force, succeed in consolidating South China, you will be fulfilling Japan's most fervent hope. To that end, we shall do everything possible to assist you in this grand endeavor, to the extent permitted by international relations, as long as Japan's interests and other endeavors are not sacrificed."

When the subject of Zhang Zuolin was broached, Tanaka spoke with conviction: "There are all sorts of rumors circulating to the effect that Japan is aiding Zhang, but they are far from the truth. Japan is assuredly not helping him. We are not supporting him in any way. We are not offering him counsel. We are certainly not providing him with any material aid. Japan's only wish is for peace and order in Manchuria."[1]

Chiang Kai-shek replied that he agreed with Tanaka about not resuming the Northern Expedition until the South had been unified. But he explained that the NRA's situation was complicated, and circumstances being what they were at the time, if he had not set the Northern Expedition in motion, the South would certainly have been divided, and there was also concern about disturbances arising there as well.

About communist infiltration of the NRA, Chiang said, "The commander is not especially frightened, but I find the notion of communists infiltrating the ranks disgraceful." Tanaka said that he shared Chiang's concerns, adding that "the reason for the spread of communism in Japan is the rise of the CCP. Japan has always opposed the communization of your country for one and only one reason, our self-defense.

[1] Zhang Qun, *Nikka: fūun no 70 nen* (Japan and China: 70 stormy years). In these recollections Zhang, who had served as interpreter for Chiang Kai-shek at the meeting with Tanaka, stated that "If memory serves, Tanaka stated unequivocally that he disliked Zhang Zuolin, and instead supported warlord Yang Yuting, Zhang Zuolin's chief of staff."

In response to Tanaka's having said that Japan was unwilling to sacrifice her interests in China, Chiang said, "I believe that if Japan's interests in China are secure, then the interests and welfare of the people of China will also be secure, and that once all is said and done, the interests of both nations are identical." He continued, saying that to attain that security, he must effect the revolution as soon as possible and stabilize China. Chiang explained that anti-Japanese activities in China were motivated by the Chinese conviction that Japan was aiding warlord Zhang Zuolin. Japan must dispel this misconception by helping the revolutionary forces achieve their goal. If she does, the Manchuria-Mongolia problem will be resolved, and the anti-Japanese agitation will end.

Then Chiang said, "If Japan is reluctant to provide any assistance to China because of her relations with other powers, she will be ignoring the special relationship between Japan and China. Many powers have dealings with us, but the only nations genuinely interested in China are Japan and Russia. Russia interferes in Chinese affairs for that reason. Why is it that Japan does not intervene and provide assistance? If I, as a member of the revolutionary party, were to speak this way, I would invite the wrath of my compatriots and be branded as a traitor. However, since I am speaking to someone who is older and wiser, and whom I trust, I am simply revealing my true feelings and stating my case to Your Excellency."[2]

It is certainly surprising that Chiang Kai-shek, commander in chief of the NRA, was making such revelations to Tanaka: (1) Russia is interfering in Chinese affairs, (2) the argument that Japan cannot assist China because of her relations with other powers is a trifling one that ignores the special relationship between Japan and China. Was this a disclosure of China's true intentions? If it was, then how should we assess Shidehara's non-interference policy toward China? Was that what the Chinese (or at least the GMD, Chiang's party) wanted? Was the anger of the Chinese people who denounced Japanese economic inroads as imperialistic and called for their ouster just a gesture? We are forced to make a 180° turn in our assessment of diplomatic relations with China, and we are suddenly confused.

In any case, the conversation between Tanaka and Chiang provides us with a precious historical resource in the form of a glimpse into the genuine feelings of the participants. It also makes us painfully aware of the complexities of the relationship between the two nations.

When Chiang returned to Shanghai he was interviewed by news reporters upon his arrival. He told them, "We shall not ignore the importance of Japanese political and economic interests in Manchuria. Furthermore, we are well aware of the astonishing elevation of Japanese national spirit during the Russo-Japanese War. Dr. Sun Yat-sen felt the same way as I do. What is more, I have promised to give due consideration to Japan's special status in Manchuria. Once our revolution

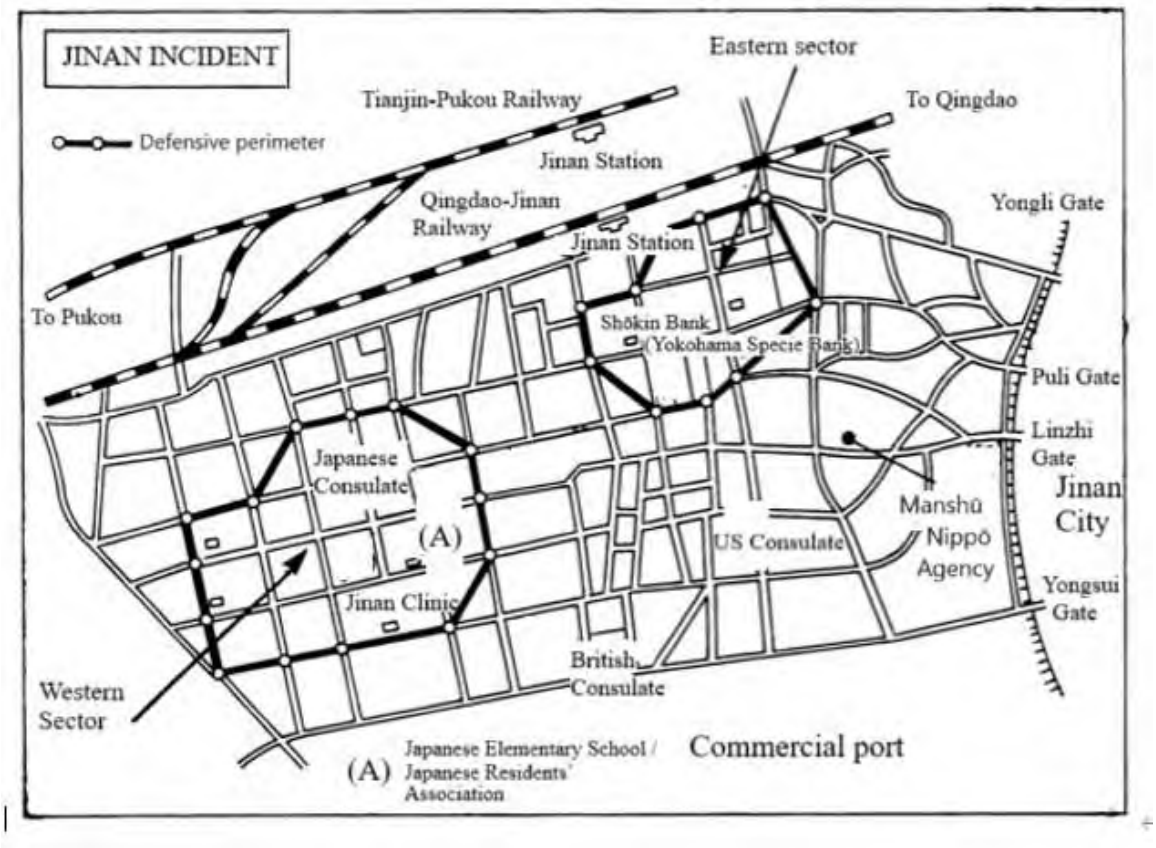
[2] Record of conversation between Prime Minister Tanaka Giichi and Chiang Kai-shek written by Satō Yasunosuke, one of Tanaka's advisers; https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/aj/meta/listPhoto?LANG=default&BID=F2006092115020628135&ID=M2006092115020728141&REFCODE=B02030164700.

has been achieved, its spearhead is likely to move toward India. We have no intention of inciting Korea to oppose Japan."[3]

If Chiang did indeed utter these words, it is possible to guess the content of his conversations with influential people while he was in Japan.

Asked to remove defenses, Japanese troops are attacked

Soon after his meeting with Prime Minister Tanaka, Chiang Kai-shek returned to China. In April 1928 Chiang once again took up the reins of the NRA and began the second phase of the Northern Expedition. Chiang was the commander in chief of all the revolutionary forces, and He Yingqi was his chief of staff. Chiang's total forces, a million men, were divided into four armies. Their opponents, the northern warlords' armies commanded by Zhang Zuolin, whose base was Beijing, were divided into seven area armies with a total of a million men led by, among others, Sun Chuanfang, Zhang Zongchang, Zhang Xueliang (son of Zhang Zuolin), and Yang Yuting. On April 7, after having issued a declaration announcing the recommencement of the Northern Expedition, the revolutionary forces (the Southern Army) began their march. They were poised to surround Jinan as early as mid-April.



[3] Yamaura Kan'ichi, ed., *Mori Kaku* (Tokyo: Takayama Shoin, 1941).

The Shandong Provincial Administrative Office was located in Jinan, which consisted of the city proper and the Jinan commercial port. Jinan was also a transportation hub, located as it was at the intersection of the Tianjin-Pukou and Qingdao-Jinan railways, and with the Yellow River and canals, it bustled with commercial activity. There were approximately 70,000 households, and the population was approximately 380,000; the population of the commercial port had been burgeoning in recent times. Most of Jinan's 2,160 foreign residents lived there, Japanese residents accounting for 1,810 of their number (including 829 women).

The mood in Jinan shifted abruptly to one of alarm with the northern advance of the NRA. There was no guarantee that there would not be a recurrence of the Nanjing Incident. When Prime Minister Tanaka received a request for troops from Jinan, he agonized. But he eventually decided that he had no choice but to dispatch an army to protect the Japanese population. Toward the end of April 1928, he dispatched soldiers to Shandong in what later became known as the 2nd Shandong Expedition.

Once the Japanese soldiers arrived in Jinan, they established two defensive sectors, one each in the eastern and western sectors of the commercial port. Most Japanese lived in the commercial port. The Japanese residents took shelter in those sectors, where they could be protected by the soldiers. Unfortunately, on May 1, after the northern forces had withdrawn, the Southern (Northern Expedition) Army entered the city, and as feared, began mutilating Japanese flags and posting anti-Japanese signs. Consequently, many disputes arose, and the atmosphere in the city suddenly became tense. On May 2 a message arrived from Commander Chiang Kai-shek requesting that the Japanese military dismantle their defensive barriers; Chiang guaranteed that order would be maintained. Believing that Chiang's word was good, Japanese soldiers spent an entire night removing all the barricades and barbed wire they had put up.

The incident arose soon after the Japanese had dismantled their defenses, on the morning of May 3. It was precipitated by violent Southern Army soldiers who launched an assault on, and then plundered, an agency for the Japanese-language newspaper *Manshū Nippō* and the home of Yoshifusa Chōhei, its operator. NRA troops attacked Japanese police officers who rushed to the scene. When a rescue unit arrived, the Chinese troops fled to their barracks, where they hid but continued to fire. Disorderly combat ensued, spreading through the entire city, with Chinese troops plundering and shooting wherever they went. Soon an agreement was reached between both sides to stop the violence, but the NRA troops ignored it, even shooting and killing a Japanese emissary bearing a white flag and calling for the suspension of hostilities. The brutal Chinese troops soon transformed the city into a scene of carnage.[4]

All over Jinan a great many Japanese men and women were massacred by savage Southern Army troops, as described in the May 4 edition of the *Tokyo Asahi Shinbun*.

"Southern Army beasts go on a rampage."

[4] Army General Staff Headquarters, *Shōwa sannen Shina jihen shuppei shi* (2nd Sino-Japanese War: 1928 Shandong expedition) (Tokyo: Gennandō Shoten, 1971).

"Brutal Southern Army troops are slaughtering Japanese citizens by the hundreds."

Among the Japanese participants in the hostilities on May 4 and 5 were five infantry battalions, one cavalry platoon, and two field artillery companies. Of those, nine men were killed in action and 32 were wounded. During the clash, about 280 Japanese civilians who found themselves outside the defensive perimeters were brought back inside amidst a hail of bullets. Unfortunately, 12 Japanese (10 men and two women) were murdered by Chinese troops at about noon on May 30. On May 5 nine corpses covered with fresh blood were discovered buried near the railroad tracks east of Jinan Station. Another corpse was found on May 6 near the Tianjin-Pukou Railway Station. Two more, of which only the skeletons remained, were found there on May 9. Additionally, two Japanese wounded by an NRA bomb died after being taken to the hospital. More than 30 Japanese were assaulted, two women were raped, and 136 homes were invaded and looted. There were about 400 victims in all, and the cost of damage incurred was estimated at ¥359,000.

Chinese troops brutally massacre Japanese citizens

During the Jinan Incident, Chinese troops perpetrated atrocities, so horrific as to defy description, on Japanese citizens. Lt. Col. Sasaki Tōichi, an army officer stationed in Nanjing who examined the mutilated corpses of his compatriots in the wake of the incident, related what he had seen as best he could in his journal.

> I happened to be present during some of the autopsies performed at the hospital. What a gruesome sight the corpses were! The hands and feet of some of the victims were bound, and their heads and faces had been slashed with something like a hatchet; other victims had been hacked to pieces. Sticks or rods have been shoved into the genitals of all the female victims. Still other victims had been set on fire; only their skeletons remained. The only way to tell that some victims were Japanese women was the white *tabi* on their feet, which had not burned when they were set on fire. The rage of our soldiers was beyond imagination.[5]

Consul Nishida Kōichi sent an official telegram to Foreign Minister Tanaka Giichi on May 9 describing the massacre of Japanese citizens in Jinan, attesting to the fact that Lt. Col. Sasaki's account contains neither falsehoods nor exaggeration.

> One victim with internal organs of abdomen exposed; one woman whose genitals were penetrated by a piece of wood
>
> One victim missing upper part of his face, which had been sliced off
>
> One victim whose right ear was cut off and had a stab wound extending from his left cheek to the right side of the back of his head

[5] Sasaki Tōichi, *op. cit.*

A completely decomposed corpse

Two men whose genitals had been hacked off.

Another account provides a detailed description of Chinese atrocities. It contains reports of autopsies performed at the Jinan Clinic in the presence of Japanese soldiers and police officers, as well as Chinese representatives. I am including a very small portion of the report here to demonstrate the cold-blooded manner in which Chinese troops killed their victims.

Saijō Hachitarō, male, age 28

Both hands tied behind back; appears to have been dragged over the ground facedown. Approximately 60 cm of small intestine protruding from bullet wound in abdomen.

Saijō Kin, female, age 24

Skin and soft tissue peeled off entire face and torso; 2-cm-square piece of wood shoved into genitals penetrating 27 cm.

Ōzato Shigejirō, male, age 28

Cause of death: contusions to face and broken bones at base of brain. Deceased apparently beaten with a club or similar implement.

Judging from profuse hemorrhaging near contusions to face and stab wounds to back, deceased was still alive when wounds inflicted.

Tahira Shin'ichi, male, aged 34

Broken bones on right side of forehead; extensive damage to skull from beatings with a sledgehammer or similar implement.

Small intestine protruding from 60-cm stab wound extending from lower lip to navel.

Inoue Kunitarō, male, age 30

Frontal bone of skull, both eyes, upper left jawbone, nose missing.

Both eyeballs gouged out.

Face beaten with a picaroon [axe-like logging tool] or similar implement.

Fujii Daijirō, male, age 40

All internal organs exposed by extensive knife wounds to abdomen; genitals severed at base.

Right eyeball gouged out.

Miyamoto Yūhachi, male, age 55

Genitals severed at base by sharp instrument

Takakuma Mume, female, age 50

21-cm-deep stab wound to genitals.[6]

Seething Japanese public opinion clamors for retribution

The rage felt by the Japanese in Jinan, both military and civilians, reached a boiling point as corpse after corpse of their compatriots slaughtered or raped by Southern Army troops was discovered. As one would expect, there was an outcry demanding punishment of the perpetrators.

On May 5 the truth about the Jinan Incident became clear. The knowledge that the Southern Army, holding Japan in deep contempt, had challenged Japanese troops and committed atrocities against resident Japanese civilians, sent shock waves everywhere, even in Japan proper. The Japanese clamored for retribution.

The Army General Staff Office determined that the use of force was the only way to preserve national prestige and secure the future. It advised the Jinan Expeditionary Army (6th Army Division) of the conditions for the resolution of the incident. The 6th Division proceeded to issue the following demands to the Chinese, who were to respond within 12 hours, by 4:00 p.m. on May 7.

(1) High-ranking officers involved in the atrocities are to be executed.

(2) Chinese troops who clashed with Japanese soldiers are to be disarmed in the presence of Japanese military personnel.

(3) All forms of anti-Japanese propaganda are to be prohibited.

(4) All Southern Army troops are to keep 12 kilometers away from Jinan and the Qingdao-Jinan Railway Line.

When the Chinese refused to satisfy those conditions, Japanese military personnel decided to attack Jinan City, where Chinese troops had taken cover. However, they limited their objectives to Chinese headquarters and the city walls. Additionally, to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, they established both a safety zone and an evacuation route. Therefore, Chinese troops fled the city under cover of darkness, and resumed their Northern Expedition. By May 11, the Japanese had occupied Jinan City without encountering any resistance.

[6] Ogawa Yūzō, *Sainan jiken wo chūshin to shite* (Jinan Incident) (Jinan: Santō Shinpōsha, 1928).

Chinese sources maintain that the Jinan Incident was deliberately planned by the Japanese to obstruct the Northern Expedition. They claimed that the dismantling of Japanese defenses was intended to facilitate encounters with Chinese troops and, in fact, to provoke them. Apparently the Chinese had forgotten that it was *they* who had demanded that the Japanese dismantle them. Moreover, they recast Japanese goodwill in trusting Chiang Kai-shek's promise as malice. A Japanese garrison of 3,500 men could not hope to obstruct a Northern Expedition in which more than 100,000 Chinese troops participated. Furthermore, if the objective had been to impede that expedition, would not Japanese units have prevented the Southern Army from entering Jinan in the first place? When they attacked Jinan City, would the Japanese have taken the trouble to prepare an evacuation route for the Southern Army?

The resolution of the Jinan Incident was entrusted to diplomatic negotiations. After several twists and turns, it was finally resolved on March 28, 1929.

Accounts of the incident in every Japanese history textbook currently in use cite Japanese interference in the Northern Expedition as its cause. The Chinese have designated May 3 as the Day of National Humiliation, using it as yet another anti-Japanese propaganda tool. Still, it should be quite clear to an unbiased observer which side was the instigator.

Impressions of a diplomat on the scene

Where did responsibility for the Jinan Incident lie? With the Chinese? With the Japanese? Qingdao Consul General Fujita Eisuke, who was on the scene, described his impressions on May 13, in the wake of the incident.

> Between 50,000 and 60,000 Southern Army troops arrived in Jinan between May 1 and the afternoon of May 2. They formed groups in various locations of the commercial port and Jinan city. Earlier, the withdrawal of Northern forces had been followed by the arrival of Southern Army soldiers in civilian clothing. Consequently, Japanese residents were moved to a safe area, where they were guarded. Also on May 2, we received the following request from Chiang Kai-shek.
>
> (1) I ask Japanese troops to withdraw immediately. I will, without fail, accept full responsibility for maintaining order in the Southern Army.
>
> (2) To demonstrate that the Japanese Army does not view the Southern Army as its enemy, do not establish a safety zone; dismantle all defensive structures, as they are not necessary."
>
> Believing Chiang Kai-shek's proclamation, our soldiers removed their defensive structures. However, on the next day, May 3, Southern Army troops invaded the home of a Japanese resident. When attempts were made to restrain them, the Chinese opened fire. It is clear beyond any doubt that the Southern Army is to blame for the initiation of the incident.
>
> Moreover, I am certain that the clash was premeditated in an organized manner from the start, and Japanese were singled out as targets because

(1) When looting commenced, shots rang out simultaneously all over the commercial port, and soon total chaos reigned in the district.

(2) Chinese troops possessed hand grenades.

(3) Almost every home looted and plundered was Japanese; very few Chinese encountered any problems.

Japanese soldiers aimed their weapons at the Shandong Provincial Administrative Office and the city walls, where the Southern Army troops were located. They did no damage to Chinese residences, earning the gratitude of Chinese merchants, who praised the accurate aim of Japanese soldiers.

The fact that they rampaged while the Japanese were guarding the commercial port so diligently reveals the true character of Chinese troops. Their actions show how cruel they are. It is nigh impossible for us Japanese to summon up determination strong enough to remain calm while Chinese troops commit brutal acts and incite maniacal xenophobia.

I would like readers to be mindful that these are not the words of a soldier, but the candid impressions of a diplomat in his assigned territory. Surely readers can sense that it was not only military officials who advocated an assertive stance against the savagery of Chinese troops.

Foreign opinion supports Japan

Let us have a look at foreign opinion on the Jinan Incident. Here is an excerpt from the British *Daily Telegraph* newspaper (10 May 1928 edition).

> The Chinese have been repeatedly committing acts of violence, as if they believed that pillaging and murder are their God-given rights. There is a limit to the patience even of the Japanese.

The article adds that the Japanese military acted in "self-defense."

The French daily *Le Temps* also advocated for the Japanese:

> Action taken by the Japanese was motivated solely by the desire to protect their compatriots residing in Jinan. There was absolutely no political motive. Indignation over actions taken in self-defense would be misplaced.

The Chinese Peking & Tientsin Times, a foreign-language newspaper in North China, was even more enthusiastic in its defense of the Japanese:

> If not for the Japanese military, every foreigner in Tsinan [Jinan] would have been slaughtered. We owe a great deal to the Japanese. The Japanese military should secure and occupy Shantung province to prevent a recurrence of this tragedy.

Additionally, the May 7 edition of the *North China Daily News* carried an article that read, in part:

> Having set aside all emotional prejudices, we have no choice but to conclude that it was the Chinese who incited the incident, and that the responsibility for the dangers ahead that resulted in so many casualties lies with them and them alone. … The southern forces are quite adroit with their use of propaganda, but the world is well aware of China's recent propaganda campaigns. Some claim that the incident would not have arisen if Japanese troops had not been dispatched to Jinan. However, no one can say with any certainty that the situation would not have been more serious had the Japanese not been on the scene. Incidents that occurred frequently in the past are still fresh in our memories. If the Japanese government had left its citizens residing in Jinan to fend for themselves in the Southern Army's war zone, it would have been guilty of a serious dereliction of duty. When all is said and done, all impartial persons would conclude that the Chinese Southern Army bears the blame for this incident.

"Chinese Soldiers Provoke the Tsinan Incident"

Professor Charles Callan Tansill, a specialist in Far Eastern diplomatic history and a luminary among historians, begins the section in his book *Back Door to War* dealing with the Jinan Incident with the following heading: "Chinese Soldiers Provoke the Tsinan Incident." Here are the opening paragraphs of that section.

> On a few occasions Americans did view China through realistic eyes. This was particularly true with reference to the Tsinan Incident. On May 3, 1928, when Chinese Nationalist soldiers began widespread looting in the city of Tsinan, Japanese troops went into action against them. Four days later the Japanese commander in Tsinan sent an ultimatum to Chiang Kai-shek demanding the immediate withdrawal of Chinese armed forces from the city. When Chiang failed to comply with this demand, Japanese troops in Tsinan launched an attack upon the Chinese Army which resulted in considerable loss of life and property.
>
> The Nationalist Government sent an appeal to the League of Nations declaring Japan to be the aggressor. In reply, Japan indicated her large interests in Shantung province and the considerable number of Japanese nationals who needed protection. The Peking and Tientsin *Times* was favorably impressed with this Japanese statement: "It is a model of what such statements should be. … China has lost a great deal of the faith once reposed in her veracity by the false propaganda in which her immature and excited emissaries indulged."
>
> The attitude of a large section of the American press concerning the Tsinan Incident was significantly pro-Japanese. The *Washington Post* thought it would be expedient, before people grew excited over alleged Japanese aggression in China, to "inquire how and when the Nationalist faction acquired the right to call itself the government of China." The *New York Herald-Tribune* believed that the incident indicated the "disappearance in China of even the semblance of national control and responsible government." The *Philadelphia Inquirer* was of the opinion that "Tsinan had emphasized the lesson taught by Nanking … Every Power concerned should show

> a firm front." The *San Francisco Chronicle* expressed the view that was commonly held throughout the United States: "Japan was forced to protect her people and property in Shantung."[7]

American diplomat welcomes Japanese expedition

The US, to some extent, anticipated a clash between the Japanese and Chinese in the spring of 1928. American diplomats in China, who were racking their brains trying to protect US nationals residing in Jinan, welcomed the Japanese expedition to Shandong.

For instance, W. Roderick Dorsey, the US consul in Qingdao, reported that the arrival of Japanese troops "has brought a feeling of relief as it did last year, and this even among Chinese, especially those of the substantial class, notwithstanding the pro forma protests of the officials."[8]

On May 3, after the incident erupted, the American consul empathized with Japan, and John V.A. MacMurray, US minister to China, also was convinced that the incident arose due to "the gross failure of the so-called Nationalist leaders to face realities and exercise their authority to avert the possibility of a clash with the Japanese." MacMurray also expressed his opposition to mediation by the US because it would be interpreted as "an effort to champion Chinese 'nationalism' against Japanese 'aggression.'"[9]

Ernest B. Price, the US Consul in Jinan, blamed "the poor discipline of Chinese troops for the outbreak of the incident." He felt that the Japanese ultimatum of May 7 was justified due to the "presence of numerous bodies of Chinese troops in the immediate environs of the foreign settlement." He respected the Japanese military for being careful to avoid firing at Chinese civilians."[10]

European expresses gratitude to Japanese military

A foreigner, a European resident of Jinan, delivered a letter he had written to Dr. MakinoTōru, the director of Jinan Clinic. Dr. Makino then translated the letter into Japanese and forwarded it to Lt. Gen. Fukuda Hikosuke, commander of the 6th Division. The writer of the letter describes his personal impressions of the conflict between Japanese and Chinese troops as he witnessed it. This document is a particularly valuable resource as it is composed from a neutral perspective.

> At 10:00 a.m. on May 3, shots rang out in Jinan. I did not know the reason for the shooting, but I thought, "the Southern Army must be attacking the Japanese." After all, propaganda leaflets inciting violence against the Japanese had been displayed on every street, becoming more vehement with each posting. The Southern Army men

[7] Charles Callan Tansill, *Back Door to War: The Roosevelt Foreign Policy, 1933-1941* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1952), 85-87.

[8] Iriye, *op. cit.*, 218.

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Ibid.,* 218-19.

may have imagined they were in a superior position, and capable of entering into combat with the Japanese. … Since I have served in the military, when I observed the attitude of the Japanese soldiers, I knew at a glance that they would win this battle. When I saw the Japanese charging forward, I rejoiced. … The Japanese soldiers were in a very difficult position, but their forceful charging, a technique peculiar to the Japanese, threw the Chinese into confusion. Looking at the scene before me, I was able to discern immediately the distinct difference between trained soldiers and a motley crew of Chinese. The Japanese officers I spoke to on the street were all very friendly, and their actions on the street were marked by fairness and justice. These are the same facts I heard everywhere from other Europeans.

The Japanese artillery repeatedly launched attacks on the city. During those attacks, looking at the traces afterward, I could see how carefully and accurately they had aimed their guns. In other words, Japanese soldiers went to great lengths to avoid injuring Chinese civilians.

In my opinion, although there were about 20,000 Southern Army troops in Jinan that day, they were frightened by the approximately 600 Japanese soldiers (not including men in the eastern defensive sector) and fled like scared rabbits. Prior to the confrontation they were exceedingly boastful and overconfident, but in the heat of the moment were so cowardly they were soon overpowered by two or three Japanese soldiers. In the eyes of the Europeans who live in the area, the arrival of Japanese troops in Jinan was indeed a blessing. I am certain that the Southern Army would have attacked not only Japanese, but also any and every foreigner. Many other Europeans to whom I spoke were of the same opinion. For protecting their lives and property, all European residents cannot help but feel grateful to the Japanese soldiers. We mourn the approximately 50 loyal and valiant Japanese officers and men who, having preserved the lives of their compatriots as well as those of other foreigners, will now rest here for all eternity.

Japan submits memorandum to League of Nations

On May 28, 1928 the Japanese Foreign Ministry submitted a memorandum to the League of Nations with the intention of informing its members about the Jinan Incident. I have reproduced some excerpts below.

(3) When recently the Southern Army commanded by General Chiang Kai-shek was advancing northward from Nanking in the direction of Tsinan, Japan dispatched her troops to Tsinan for the protection of 2,000 Japanese residents there.

It need scarcely be said that this dispatch of Japanese troops was a measure of self-protection rendered unavoidable by the above-mentioned state of affairs prevailing in China. In spite of this precautionary measure taken by Japan, some Southern soldiers looted a Japanese house. This outrage originated the whole incident.

The Southern troops then at Tsinan proceeded to attack the Japanese forces and residents at various places. They murdered over a dozen Japanese residents, including women, and plundered more than 100 Japanese houses. It is to be sincerely regretted that these outrages compelled the Japanese troops to resort to force for the protection of the Japanese residents.

> The following points call for special attention in a survey of the circumstances attending the Tsinan Incident:
>
> The unfortunate incident owes its origin to the fact that Southern soldiers looted the house of a Japanese resident and that they fired on the Japanese soldiers who went to the rescue.
>
> Before the incident occurred the responsible officers of the Southern Army repeatedly declared that they would assume the responsibility for the maintenance of peace and order, and demanded the removal of the Japanese defense works.
>
> The Japanese troops removed the defense works on the night which, it so happened, preceded the outbreak of the disturbances and some of the Japanese residents who had gone to places of safety returned home.
>
> The incident occurred immediately after the Japanese defense works were removed. At the moment that happened, the Chinese troops in various places simultaneously began to attack the Japanese troops and to outrage and plunder the Japanese residents. This outrage and plunder were almost entirely confined to the Japanese.
>
> These circumstances created the impression that the disturbance was designedly brought about by the Chinese, at least by the lower classes among them.
>
> In the face of much difficulty the Japanese repeatedly established contact with the Chinese and arranged for the suspension of hostilities. On each occasion orders failed to be obeyed on the Chinese side and hostilities had necessarily to be continued.
>
> As the Chinese troops, including "un-uniformed soldiers," fired indiscriminately under cover of any houses they could find, the Japanese troops had to engage in street fighting in the most difficult circumstances.
>
> The brutalities which the Chinese soldiers committed on some of the resident Japanese men and women immediately after the incident occurred are so cruel that description of them is impossible.
>
> It is alleged that the limit of twelve hours attached to the demand which was made by the Japanese commander on the 7th gave the Southern Army scarcely any time for consideration. It must be noted, however, that at that moment the circumstances were so urgent that the Japanese commander was convinced that, if there were any delay, sharp practice on the part of the Southern troops would find its opportunity, and place not only the Japanese residents but the Japanese troops themselves in the most dangerous position. His precaution was but natural in view of the faithlessness hitherto manifested on the Chinese side.[11]

This memorandum was intended to describe Japan's official position on the incident to the international community. In a concise, restrained writing style it indicates accurately where the responsibility for the incident lies. It was obvious to an impartial observer whether Japan or China was to blame for the incident, no matter what sort of false rumors or counter-propaganda the Chinese attempted to spread.

[11] "Japan Gives League Her Case on Tsinan," *New York Times*, 30 May 1928.

Bitterness penetrates the hearts of the Japanese people

For those conversant with the origin of and the developments in the Jinan Incident, there is no need to debate about whether the blame lies with the Japanese or the Chinese. If it is true that the incident claimed the lives of more than a few Chinese civilians, then the responsibility for those casualties, without a doubt, rests with Chinese troops, who spread false rumors about the Japanese, violated the truce, and repeatedly engaged in acts of provocation. History has taught us that the Chinese were the cause of all such conflicts, and that Japan always bore the brunt of the consequences. The Jinan Incident was no exception.

The Japanese people, whether military or civilian, were shocked and filled with bitterness by the savagery that characterized the Jinan Incident, as it did the incidents in Nanjing and Hankou that preceded it as well. (I have already described the acts of brutality committed by Chinese troops during the Sino-Japanese War.) It was difficult *not* to believe that cruel and inhuman acts came naturally to the Chinese soldier.

The debate over whether what is now referred to as the Nanjing massacre of 1937 actually took place has continued for decades. But even supposing that there is some truth to the accusations, we must be mindful of the earlier Nanjing and Jinan incidents, the painful memories of which are engraved on the hearts and minds of all Japanese, as are anger and enmity. If the Nanjing and Jinan incidents, and the Tongzhou Incident (which I shall describe later) had not occurred, nothing remotely resembling the so-called Nanjing massacre would ever have occurred. It is this writer's firm belief that anyone bringing up the "Nanjing massacre" should not forget to mention the national tragedies that had occurred in that very same Nanjing, and in Jinan, more than 10 years earlier.

The truth about the "murder" of Chinese diplomat

During the Jinan Incident, the Chinese once again concocted a warped tale, which they then began to publicize widely. This work of fiction had Japanese soldiers massacring a Chinese diplomat. The plot: on the evening of May 3, Japanese soldiers stormed the office of the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs for Shandong in the commercial port of Jinan, and proceeded to slice off the ears and noses of newly arrived negotiator Cai Gongshi and 15 others with bayonets, and then murder them.

However, this story was quite different from the truth, which I shall now relate, referring to Japanese Foreign Ministry records. After the incident, the Japanese consul-general in Jinan interviewed Capt. Kiba of the 6th Company, 47th Infantry Regiment, which was directly involved in the incident. According to his testimony, "the 6th Co. was dispersed in front of the War Zone Administration Office building during a confrontation on the morning of May 3, engaged in combat with the enemy. When shots fired from the third floor of the building claimed the lives of two Japanese soldiers, our men fired back at the upper floors of the building (we did not know at that point that it was the War Zone Administrative Office), silencing the enemy's gunfire. It was after 7:00 p.m. when Capt. Kiba led the 2nd Platoon into the building to look for stragglers. During the search we were suddenly fired upon by men in civilian clothing armed with pistols; they had been hiding in the basement. We immediately stabbed or shot all 16 of them to death."

Capt. Kiba, who was present at the confrontation from beginning to end, firmly denied having committed any atrocities whatsoever. In the first place, they had no time to do so, and besides, it would have been nearly impossible to slice off noses or ears with bayonets, which are ill-suited to such activities. Ten days after the confrontation, Japanese soldiers accompanied by military police conducted an inspection of the War Zone Administration Office Building. They found rifles, swords, and 200 rifle bullets on the third floor. They also discovered 15 military caps, 20 uniforms, spent shell casings, and other materiel scattered around in the basement. They seized those items as evidence in the presence of police patrol officers and members of the Christian church opposite the building in question.[12]

The Chinese poured all their energy into publicizing the "massacre of a diplomat," which they concocted on the basis of exactly two actual facts: the building in question was being used temporarily as a negotiating venue and Cai, one of the negotiators, just happened to be a diplomat.

But the Japanese were not provided with any notification to the effect that Cai Gongshi had been entrusted with the position of negotiator. At about noon on May 3, when the incident erupted, the acting consul, Nishida Kōichi, was conferring with Chiang Kai-shek at Southern Army headquarters in Jinan, at which time Chiang mentioned only that he had appointed Cai to serve as a negotiator in Jinan. However, the Japanese units that inspected the building were not privy even to that information. All they knew was that there were many Southern Army men holed up in the building, and that they were shooting at the building because they were being fired upon and had lost two men. They were taking legitimate military action.

Furthermore, the British consul at Jinan reassured Consul General Fujita: "This is just the Chinese propaganda that we've become accustomed to. I do not believe it." Nevertheless, in the shooting of Cai the Chinese found the perfect anti-Japanese ammunition, about which they published articles in every Chinese newspaper, day after day. The Nanjing government went as far as to send an official letter to Cai's family, announcing that it would present them with 1,000 yuan as a condolence gesture. Moreover, on May 20 in Nanjing a gathering was held to observe the martyrdom of Cai Gongshi. It was attended by more than 200 distinguished Chinese. Government representatives and others delivered speeches in which they said that to console Cai's spirit, "we must prepare for revenge." The atmosphere in the audience was one of extreme tension. Once again, Chinese propaganda had made a "fact" out of whole cloth.

Manchurian flag supplanted

The ultimate objective of the Northern Expedition was the defeat of Zhang Zuolin. The Japanese, who did not want the fighting to spread from Beijing over the Shanhai Pass into Manchuria, advised Zhang to retreat to his native Manchuria. The outcome the Japanese hoped for was a peaceful conclusion to the Northern Expedition, with Beijing's being taken over by the NRA. But Zhang, who was convinced that he was fighting Japan's battle against communist forces in Beijing, ignored the warning. He was unhappy that Japan was helping Chiang Kai-shek, who had succumbed to communist influence, while encouraging him, Zhang, to return to Manchuria. On

[12] Report from Acting Consul-general Nishida to Foreign Minister Tanaka dated May 20,1928.

June 4, 1928, as the NRA finally neared Beijing, Zhang boarded a special train bound for Fengtian. A bomb planted by Japanese Guandong Army officers exploded, ending the life of Zhang Zuolin.

Prime Minister Tanaka had hoped that Chiang Kai-shek would take control of China (south of the Great Wall), and that Zhang Zuolin, once placed in charge of Manchuria, would protect Japanese interests there. When Tanaka heard the news of the disaster, he reportedly sighed deeply, and looking up at the heavens said, "I am finished!" But the Japanese military men on the scene and thus familiar with the anti-Japanese deeds of the Fengtian warlords, could not overcome their distrust of the head warlord Zhang Zuolin. It is not surprising that they arrived at the conclusion that the only way to protect Japanese residents in Manchuria and Japanese interests was to eliminate Zhang. In later years, Staff Officer Col. Kōmoto Daisaku, the mastermind of the assassination wrote, "There was only one solution to the Manchurian problem, and that was to kill the kingpin. It was enough just to obliterate one man: Zhang Zuolin."[13]

Five days after Zhang's death, the NRA entered Beijing. At that point the Northern Expedition ended, and the north and south were supposedly united.

Zhang Xueliang, the new young leader of Manchuria, could not forgive the Japanese for having killed his father. In December 1928 he replaced the five-colored Manchurian flag with the blue-and-white GMD banner and declared his allegiance to the Nanjing government. This event was thereafter referred to as the Northeast Flag Replacement.

Given their close relationship with Manchuria, the Japanese had been voicing strong opposition to Zhang Xueliang's union with the Nanjing government, which had championed the anti-Japanese movement and the restoration of national sovereignty. But Xueliang had not consulted with the Japanese prior to his decision to replace the northeast flag. Furthermore, among the several thousand blue-and-white GMD flags displayed simultaneously in the three eastern provinces, red flags could already be seen here and there, eerie symbols of the communization of Manchuria. The fears instilled in the Japanese by the flag replacement were far from groundless.

[13] Kōmoto Daisaku, "Watakushi ga Chō Sakurin wo koroshita" (I killed Zhang Zuolin), *Bungei Shunjū*, 32 (1954), 194-201; https://www.aozora.gr.jp/cards/001797/files/56628_57514.html.

6. THE KELLOGG-BRIAND PACT AND THE RIGHT OF SELF-DEFENSE

Treaty renouncing war recognizes self-defense warfare

In 1928 the Tanaka Cabinet joined the other powers in signing an international pact, the General Treaty for Renunciation of War as a National Policy, the intent of which was to demonstrate to the world the desire of the signatories to abolish warfare.

This same treaty was used excessively in the condemnation of Japan at the IMTFE (Tokyo Trials), which was held after the Greater East Asian War. Japan was accused of having violated the international pact any number of times, beginning with the Manchurian Incident. Proposed by Frank B. Kellogg, US secretary of state, and Aristide Briand, the French foreign minister (and therefore commonly known as the Kellogg-Briand Pact, but also referred to as the Pact of Paris), the treaty was concluded in Paris on August 27, 1928. The original signatories included Japan, the UK, the US, France, Italy, and Germany. Before long, many other nations signed the pact, even Russia, which was not then a member of the League of Nations. The Kellogg-Briand Pact comprised the following three provisions:

> Article 1
>
> The High Contracting Parties solemnly declare in the names of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it, as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another.
>
> Article II
>
> The High Contracting Parties agree that the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise among them, shall never be sought except by pacific means.
>
> (Article III describes ratification and procedural matters.)[1]

However, the idealistic treaty had a major flaw: thanks to assertions on the part of powers like the UK, US, and France, it made exceptions for defensive wars. Furthermore, as the US argued, it allowed the nation or nations involved in the dispute to decide whether the claim of self-defense was legitimate. If we were to accept the right of the relevant nations to interpret what constitutes a war of self-defense, the war-renunciation treaty would be totally invalid as law, since all wars are waged in the name of self-defense.

Reservation of the right of self-defense

In his judgement submitted to the IMTFE, held after the Greater East Asian War had ended, Justice Radhabinod Pal refers to a statement made by Secretary Kellogg concerning self-defense, in which the US argued that the right of self-defense was not limited to a nation's own territory.

[1] https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/LON/Volume%2094/v94.pdf.

> On the question of self-defense, Mr. Kellogg declared that the right of self-defense was not limited to the defense of territory under the sovereignty of the state concerned, and that under the treaty, each state would have the prerogative of judging for itself, WHAT ACTION THE RIGHT OF SELF-DEFENSE COVERED and when it came into play, subject to the risk that this judgment might not be endorsed by the rest of the world. "The United States must judge … and it is answerable to the public opinion of the world if it is not an honest defense; that is all." This is Mr. Kelloggg's [sic] own statement.[2]

What was Japan's reaction to the treaty? Foreign Minister Tanaka prepared a written response describing Japan's position and stating that he agreed with the American proposal. When he delivered it to US Ambassador Charles MacVeagh, he sought the diplomat's understanding by further elaborating on Japan's attitude toward China. About the right of self-defense, he said, "Japan's neighbor, China, is constantly engaged in civil warfare. Although war with China is, of course, not something we wish to engage in, we must always be cognizant of the necessity of taking appropriate defensive measures." At that time, it was not only a matter of protecting vested interests and Japanese residents, but also of the need to maintain order, the ultimate goal being to establish Manchuria as a safe zone between Japan and Russia.[3]

The powers rejected warfare as a means of implementing national policy, but reserved the right to engage in defensive warfare. Furthermore, decisions and determinations relating to the exercise of the right of self-defense were the prerogative of each of the relevant nations.

What nation has ever gone to war *except* in the name of self-defense? Every nation that engages in war, even nations that are patently aggressors, justifies its action by maintaining that they are waging wars of self-defense. As long as nations are recognizing each other's right of self-defense, and the determination of whether the exercise of that right is legitimate, we cannot expect any declaration or treaty renouncing war to be meaningful. According to historian Thomas A. Bailey, some Americans "sneered that the treaty had no teeth, except the feeble pressure of world opinion; it was just "a New Year's resolution" or "a letter to Santa Claus."[4] And then we have diplomat Ishii Kikujirō, in *Diplomatic Commentaries*, writing, "If too much emphasis be laid on ideals in considering the anti-war question, the matter will hardly escape becoming a religious issue."[5]

Later, the Manchurian Incident case was brought before the League of Nations. Japan was accused of violating the Pact of Paris. But when the league deliberated on the incident, Japan

---

[2] Radhabinod Pal, "Dissentient Judgment of Justice Pal" in *International Military Tribunal for the Far East* (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, Inc., 1999), 45.

[3] Ōhata Tokushirō, "Fusen jōyaku to Nippon" (Pact of Paris and Japan), *Kokusai seiji* (International relations), vol. 28, no. 2 (1964).

[4] Bailey, *op. cit.*, 650.

[5] Ishii, *op. cit.*, 244.

refuted the charge, citing the right of self-defense. By recognizing the reservation of the right of self-defense, the Kellogg-Briand Pact significantly affected future generations.

USSR first to violate Pact of Paris

It is ironic that the Kellogg-Briand Pact enjoyed little respect from its signatories, especially given the lofty idealism embodied in its language.

Thomas A. Bailey, an American specialist in diplomatic history, describes the reaction in Congress when the US signed the treaty:

> The Senate had few illusions about the agreement for abolishing war. Senator Reed of Missouri branded it an "international kiss," while Senator Glass of Virginia did not want people to think him "simple enough to suppose that it is worth a postage stamp … ." No formal reservations were attached to the treaty, but the Senate Foreign Relations committee did present an "interpretation" reserving the right of self-defense, the right to fight for the Monroe Doctrine, and the right to enforce the treaty against violators.
>
> Such was the tidal wave of public opinion that the Senate approved the Kellogg-Briand Pact, in January, 1929, by a vote of 85 to 1. The next order of business was the bill for constructing fifteen new cruisers, which shortly thereafter were approved. The *New York Evening Post* jibed, "If, after just having signed a peace treaty with twenty-six nations, we need fifteen new cruisers, how many would we have needed if we hadn't just signed a peace treaty with twenty-six nations?"[6]

The first violation of the pact soon occurred, the guilty party being the USSR. It was a contravention that should be committed to historical memory. In 1929 Zhang Xueliang searched the Soviet consulate in Harbin. There he discovered and confiscated evidence of a communist revolutionary plot, which motivated him to seize control of the Chinese Eastern Railway. The Soviets retaliated by crossing the border between the USSR and Manchuria with both air and land forces, and invading Manchuria in November. They repelled Zhang's northeastern army and succeeded in restoring the railway to joint Soviet-Chinese administration, as it had been since the days of imperial Russia. The Sino-Soviet conflict drew the attention of the US, UK, France, and Italy concerning the USSR's obligation to the Pact of Paris. But the Soviets objected to the interference of third-party nations, insisting that they had acted in self-defense.

When the Manchurian Incident arose, the Japanese advocated for negotiations to be held between Japan and China, arguing that action taken by the Guandong Army had been motivated by self-defense. However, the US castigated Japan over its "violation of the anti-war treaty." Additionally, the Lytton Report, issued in 1932, rejected Japan's assertion of self-defense. Nevertheless, when I recall that, two years prior to the Manchurian Incident, the USSR violated the Pact of Paris by invading Manchuria in the name of self-defense, I find that the argument that the Manchurian Incident was an act of Japanese aggression loses all credibility. Moreover, when I consider the fact that at the IMTFE, the very same Soviet Union condemned Japan's policies

[6] Bailey, *op. cit.*, 650.

subsequent to the Manchurian Incident as acts of aggression, I am overcome by an absolutely unendurable feeling of helplessness.

In any case, I will refrain from defending the Kellogg-Briand Pact, as it is not worthy of such an effort. The aforementioned Alfred Griswold exquisitely assesses the treaty by writing that when the break between China and Russia came in 1929, "the Kellogg Pact was essentially as meaningless as an agreement not to raise umbrellas except in rainy weather."[7]

[7] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 393.

CHAPTER 10: THE MANCHURIAN INCIDENT

1. RISING TENSION IN MANCHURIA; LIUTIAOGOU INCIDENT

Shidehara diplomacy vs. Tanaka diplomacy

The pillars of Shidehara diplomacy were non-interference in domestic Chinese affairs, international cooperation, and emphasis on economic affairs. On the other hand, Tanaka diplomacy was rooted in a "positive" policy toward China, an emphasis on public order, and the willingness to resort to military means to resolve problems. The comparison seems to have invited some to believe that the policies of the two men were incompatible. Yet there was very little difference between the ultimate objectives of the diplomatic styles espoused by the two men. It is possible to argue that the only difference lay in the means by which they were to be implemented. For instance, we have the following excerpt from the Lytton Report issued on the occasion of the Manchurian Incident.

> Until the events of September 1931, the various Japanese Cabinets, since 1905 appeared to have the same general aims in Manchuria, but they differed as to the policies best suited to achieves these aims. They also differed somewhat as to the extent of the responsibility which Japan should assume for the maintenance of peace and order.
>
> The general aims for which they worked in Manchuria were to maintain and develop Japan's vested interests, to foster the expansion of Japanese enterprise, and to obtain adequate protection for Japanese lives and property. In the policies adopted for realizing these aims there was one cardinal feature which may be said to have been common to them all. This feature had been the tendency to regard Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia as distinct from the rest of China. It resulted naturally from the Japanese conception of their country's "special position" in China. Whatever differences may have been observable between the specific policies advocated by the various Cabinets in Japan — as, for example, between the so-called "friendship policy" of Baron Shidehara and the so-called "positive policy" of the late General Baron Tanaka — they have always had this feature in common.
>
> The "friendship policy" developed from about the time of the Washington Conference and was maintained until April 1927; it was then supplanted by the "positive policy," which was followed until July 1929; finally, the "friendship policy" was again adopted and continued the official policy of the Foreign Office until September 1931. In the spirit which actuated the two policies there was a marked difference: the "friendship policy" rested, in Baron Shidehara's words, "on the basis of good will and neighbourliness;" the "positive policy" rested upon military force. But, in regard to the concrete measures which should be adopted in Manchuria, these two policies differed largely on the question as to the lengths to which Japan should go to maintain peace and order in Manchuria and to protect Japanese interests.
>
> (…)

> The Tanaka policy definitely asserted that Japan would take upon herself the task of preserving "peace and order" in Manchuria — in contrast to previous policies which limited their objectives to protecting Japanese interests there.[1]

In other words, Shidehara and Tanaka diplomacy were in agreement about protecting Japanese interests in China and Manchuria. But Tanaka parted ways with Shidehara's non-interference policy in that he was keen on maintaining order in China and Manchuria when those interests were at stake. This stance was inevitable, given that Shidehara's policy of neighborliness and friendship could neither quell Chinese anti-Japanese activities nor fully protect Japanese interests in China.

Shidehara's non-interference policy, Tanaka's positive policy (sometimes appeasement policy) toward Zhang Xueliang: none of these succeeded in quelling China's anti-Japanese campaigns nor its hostility toward Japan. With no effective solution in sight, the relationship lurched toward the catastrophe that was the Manchurian Incident. The reason for the deterioration of Japan-China relations should be attributed not to the policies adopted by Shidehara or Tanaka, but to Japan's misfortune in having a disorderly nation like China for a neighbor.

Advent of revolutionary diplomacy

Subsequent to the Northeast Flag Replacement, the influence of the communizing GMD spread to the three eastern provinces, and anti-Japanese sentiment there intensified steadily. Communization and the anti-Japanese campaign were, without a doubt, the underlying causes of the Manchurian Incident. Still, both had been gradually brewing in the wake of the First United Front and especially in the course of the Northern Expedition. Wang Zhengting (aka C.T. Wang), who was installed as the Nanjing government's minister of foreign affairs in the throes of the Jinan Incident, cleverly used the democratic movement to promote anti-Japanese policies. Among them, the one that proved most shocking to the Japanese was his "revolutionary diplomacy."

Revolutionary diplomacy was an exceedingly selfish diplomatic ploy by which the Chinese announced, without engaging in any negotiations, that all unequal treaties would be abrogated. Upon the conclusion of the Northern Expedition, on July 7, 1928, the Nationalist government initiated the implementation of another aspect of revolutionary diplomacy, advising Japan that the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation concluded in 1896 was now null and void. According to the provisions of that treaty, negotiations on its revision could be held every 10 years. However, this time the Chinese stated that the treaty would become invalid should such negotiations take place and fail. With full support from the ruling and opposition parties, Japan vehemently protested this a unilateral declaration for making light, as it did, of international practices and the principles of good faith.

[1] League of Nations: Commission of Enquiry into the Sino-Japanese Dispute (Geneva: League of Nations, 1932); tails/service-gdc-gdcwdl-wd-l_-11-60-1-wdl_11601-wdl_11601/page/34/mode/2up.

Japan recognizes Chinese tariff autonomy

On July 2, 1929, Hamaguchi Osachi, chairman of Japan's Constitutional Democratic Party (Rikken Minseitō), became prime minister of Japan. Shidehara Kijūrō began his second stint as foreign minister. Soon after Hamaguchi's Cabinet was installed, his administration came out with guidelines comprising 10 major policies. Among them, the diplomatic guidelines called for a "renewal of diplomacy toward China," as "renewing diplomatic relations between Japan and China and strengthening friendly relations between neighbors are tasks of the utmost urgency." The framework for this renewal, in which Shidehara's peculiar brand of idealism is evident, included the following:

(1) Both Japan and China must appreciate their special positions, exercise sympathetic scrutiny, and impartially and fairly seek points of accord.
(2) The Japanese government seeks a harmonious coexistence with China and mutual prosperity.
(3) Japan shall reject all policies involving aggression anywhere in China.
(4) Japan shall provide amicable support toward the achievement of China's national aspirations.
(5) It is right and proper for Japan to have a legitimate, vital interest in Chinese survival and prosperity.

It was the Japan-China Tariff Accord that lent prestige to Shidehara's second term as foreign minister. The treaty, concluded on May 6, 1930, recognized Chinese tariff autonomy. It was a partial revision of the 1896 Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, and as such was welcomed as the harbinger of a new phase in the relationship between Japan and China.

Communization of Manchuria and anti-Japanese uprisings

Shidehara diplomacy was enjoying a measure of success, and Japan's relationship with China was taking a turn for the better. Unfortunately, deep in Manchuria communism was rapidly gaining ground, and violent anti-Japanese incidents were breaking out in the Jiandao region, where the Chinese government had no control.

In June 1928 the Central Committee of the CCP held its 6th National Congress in Moscow. Policy drafted there emphasized land-reform-promotion drives intended to attract workers and peasants to the party. Subsequently, efforts were made to expand CCP cells in Manchuria. In November 1928 the CCP established a Manchurian Committee, which wasted no time in condemning the "traitorous diplomacy" of the Nanjing and Fengtian authorities. It called on the people of Manchuria to participate in anti-Japanese acts, and advocated furtherance of the struggle over railway rights, opposition to land transfers, the recovery of Port Arthur and Dalian, and the severing of economic and diplomatic ties with Japan. The CCP placed special emphasis on direct action as a means of abolishing unequal treaties, and advocated the revival of the "glorious struggle" to retake the Hankou Concession by force.

Communists in Manchuria began joining forces with anti-Japanese Korean groups and various communist organizations. Then in January 1930, the Korean groups decided to disband and join the CCP. During April and May, the Korean Communist Party of Manchuria, the principal

Korean organization, opted to disband and merge with the CCP's Manchurian Committee. (In early April the Korean Communist Party formed the All-Manchuria Insurrection Committee embracing more than 4,000 party members, and began making plans for an armed uprising on the anniversary of the May 30 Incident in Shanghai.) All these events led to the Jiandao uprising that occurred on May 30.

The uprising affected all of Jiandao, including the villages of Longjing and Toudaogou. From May 30, in the middle of the night, through May 31 electric power plants, and communications and traffic facilities were destroyed. The Japanese Consulate and the homes of pro-Japanese Koreans were attacked, and Japanese and Koreans living in the area were thrown into panic. Immediately after the incident ended, Japanese residents held a meeting at which they criticized the spinelessness of the Foreign Ministry and local authorities. They drafted a petition demanding an increased police presence, which they sent to the prime minister, foreign minister, governor-general of Korea, and Japanese political parties and newspapers.

On October 6 a Chinese assaulted a Korean. Not long thereafter, Chinese troops fired a volley of shots at Japanese police officers on patrol in Longjing. Two officers were killed instantly, and another was seriously injured. The Japanese decided to dispatch reinforcements in the form of 103 police officers. Japanese and Chinese garrisons now confronted each other, one on each side of the Manchurian border with Korea.

Then guerrilla CCP commenced guerrilla attacks all over Jiandao, targeting pro-Japanese Koreans and Japanese organizations (the 2nd Jiandao Insurrection). At that time even Korean residents criticized the Foreign Ministry's handling of the incidents and petitioned the Japanese to use force.

During this time Shidehara judged that increasing the number of Japanese police would intensify strife between Japan and China, and even threaten Japanese interests in Manchuria and Mongolia. Therefore, over the objections of Saito Makoto, governor-general of Korea, he ordered the reinforcements to withdraw (on November 5), but that decision was met by vociferous protests against Shidehara from Japanese residents of Jiandao.

In *The Manchurian Incident and the Consul-General at Fengtian,* Hayashi Kyūjirō, consul-general at Fengtian at the time, recalled his dissatisfaction with Shidehara's failure to comprehend the problems in Jiandao. When Hayashi met with Governor-General Saitō in July 1930, he explained that "the persistent pressure from China and the rampancy of anti-Japanese groups that we are seeing now in Jiandao create the impression that our country is at a crossroads. If there is no improvement, our influence in the region will deteriorate with each passing day. If we are to maintain our current strength, we must bolster our police force significantly. (…) Regardless of which direction it chooses, our government must decide on a policy. It is my hope that the Governor-General will arrive at an opinion and make a strong recommendation to the government." (…) Hayashi then returned to [China], but at the end of the same month, together with Governor-General Saitō, who by then had returned to Korea, and Okada Kanekazu, consul-general of Jiandao, who had been urgently recalled to Japan, visited Foreign Minister Shidehara to discuss the Jiandao problem. According to Hayashi, at the meeting, "Consul-General Okada explained the situation, and I added to what he had said.

Governor-General Saitō asked the foreign minister about the government's fundamental policy on Jiandao. At that time, the foreign minister seemed to be lost in thought and, as if he had entered into another conversation, began talking about minor matters without seriously addressing the matter at hand. Even when the elderly governor-general asked him again about the government's stance, Shidehara did not give a clear answer, instead going off on another tangent."[2] This anecdote serves as a subtle indication of Shidehara's indifference not only toward the Jiandao problem, but also toward every aspect of the Manchurian problem.

Despite a succession of anti-Japanese incidents in the form of assassinations and attacks, whose perpetrators brazenly solicited direct action and illegal activities, the authorities in the three eastern provinces were unable to contain them.

In the latter half of 1930 the number of terrorist incidents in the Jiandao region, referred to as communist bandit incidents, was estimated at 81, resulting in 44 deaths, and countless injured, not to mention homes destroyed by fire. The Chinese authorities discovered, through arrests of the terrorists, that the weapons and ammunition used in these incidents had been brought in from the USSR.[3] Ten years earlier, fearing that the communization of the Russian Far East was certain to spread to Manchuria and Korea, both being adjacent to Russia, the Japanese had sent troops to Siberia. Those fears were now a reality, validating Japan's foresight.

Revolutionary diplomacy inflames anti-Japanese sentiment

Even after the Northern Expedition resulted in the unification of north and south China, domestic strife raged throughout the nation. For five years, from 1929 to 1934, China again descended into the morass of civil war as warlords opposed to Chiang Kai-shek's centralized government continued to launch barrages of attacks against him.

Even during that period of conflict, however, Wang Zhengting, China's foreign minister, persisted with negotiations whose objective was to abrogate the unequal treaties. In September 1929 Wang drew attention to his "scheduled diplomacy" in one of his speeches: "Scheduling is one way to increase efficiency, and also the most economical means of achieving success. My schedule for this year is to revise commercial treaties and move ahead with efforts designed to achieve tariff autonomy and abolish consular jurisdiction." This sort of primitive idealism ignores the fact that diplomacy always involves a dialogue with another party. In that sense it is self-centered, and remains firmly rooted in Sinocentrism.

At the end of 1930, after Chiang Kai-shek had temporarily unified China, GMD diplomacy intensified its uncompromising course. The Chinese began pressuring Japan to return the Hankou concession immediately and publicizing Wang's revolutionary diplomacy. On December 22

[2] Hayashi Kyūjirō, *Manshū jihen to Hōten sōryōji* (Manchurian Incident and the consul-general at Fengtian) (Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1978).

[3] *Gaimushō* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), ed., *Nihon gaikō nenpyō narabi ni shuyō bunsho* (Chronology and important papers on Japanese diplomacy), vol. 2 (Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1965).

Wang irritated the powers, including Japan, by declaring, "The Nationalist government can no longer stomach extraterritoriality. We are determined to take the appropriate measures to correct this situation."

In 1931 the revolutionary diplomacy tactics intensified even further. In January the GMD government selected three objectives: (1) the withdrawal of all foreign troops stationed in China, (2) abolition of extraterritoriality, and (3) recovery of unclaimed concessions in Tianjin and Hankou. It also enacted a law, which would take effect after the abolition of extraterritoriality, to establish special courts in the five major cities as a temporary measure. In February the GDP instructed the Foreign Ministry to resume negotiations on extraterritoriality immediately, and issued a strict order against engaging in diplomatic compromise.

Consequently, at the beginning of 1931, ethnic consciousness was extremely strong in China due to the special circumstances that had arisen after the completion of the Northern Expedition. Demands for the restoration of sovereignty aroused public opinion. Except for the diplomats, everyone was talking about forceful revolutionary diplomacy, and criticizing the weakness of the authorities. As for the diplomats, for various reasons they were leaving room for compromise, but continued to make vacuous, inflexible pronouncements. By 1931 anti-Japanese sentiment in Manchuria had escalated to the point where the central government could not begin to control it.

From mid-March on, anti-Japanese propaganda disseminated by organizations subordinate to the GMD sharpened. On March 26 a conference intended to commemorate the establishment of the GMD in northeastern China was held in Fengtian. There violent anti-Japanese demands were issued that Zhang Xueliang could not suppress. Furthermore, in April the Liaoning Nationalist Foreign Affairs Association sponsored an anti-Japanese conference in Fengtian, which was attended by more than 300 representatives from all over Manchuria who discussed eliminating Japanese interests in Manchuria, including the confiscation of the South Manchuria Railway. The GMD's organized leadership helped the anti-Japanese movement spread vigorously until it had infected every geographical and social sector of Manchuria.

Outcry from China: "Down with Japanese Imperialism!"

On April 4, 1931 the second Wakatsuki Cabinet took office. But the mood at the celebratory festivities was somber. Representatives of Japanese citizens residing in Manchuria spoke out resolutely against the relinquishment of extraterritoriality. Petitions opposing the abolition of extraterritoriality, and expressing the hope that resolute action be taken to prevent its relinquishment, had been collected from chambers of commerce throughout Manchuria and China. They were compiled into a letter requesting that "a forceful method of preventing the abolition of extraterritoriality be devised," and sent to Foreign Minister Shidehara and Sakurauchi Rikio, the new minister of commerce and industry."[4]

However, at that very moment a wave of public opinion opposing the relinquishment of extraterritoriality was gaining momentum in Japan, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang's

[4] James William Morley, ed., *Japan's Road to the Pacific War: Volume 1: The Loon Naval Conference and the Manchurian Incident* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984).

revolutionary diplomacy program was being newly announced, along with a five-part schedule for its implementation. During Phase 1 China would recover tariff autonomy. During Phase 2 extraterritoriality would be abolished. During Phase 3 China would recover foreign concessions, during Phase 4 leased territory would be reclaimed, and during Phase 5 railway interests, railway rights, inland river navigation rights, and coastal trade rights would be regained.

Shigemitsu Mamoru, consul-general at Shanghai, met with Foreign Minister Wang on April 14, and asked him if the five-phase program in Wang's revolutionary diplomacy represented his "true intentions." Wang replied in the affirmative. In response to Shigemitsu's question as to whether Guandongzhou, which encompassed Port Arthur and Dalian was included in China's demand for retrocession of foreign concessions, and if "railway rights" also included the South Manchurian Railway. "Of course," was Wang's reply.[5]

From the time when Saburi Sadao was minister to China (October-November 1929), there was a tacit understanding that the sensitive Manchurian problem would not be broached during diplomatic negotiations. Japan-China diplomacy would progress in such a way that first the unequal treaties would be revised, creating a favorable ambience for Japan-China relations. Only then would efforts be made to resolve the Manchurian problem. But Wang's revolutionary diplomacy program ignored this tacit understanding, and aimed to recover every single one of Japan's interests in Manchuria, and to make matters worse, within a short period of time. Also, apparently Zhang Xueliang was making headway implementing the Nanjing government's guidelines. Wang's program came as a great shock to Shigemitsu, who feared that "all of my hard work may have been for naught."[6]

Toward the end of April Japan's Foreign Ministry gathered around Shigemitsu, who had returned to Japan, and began work on guidelines for extraterritoriality negotiations. The result was the draft of an outline that established the principles governing the abolition of extraterritoriality.

The outline established the principles upon which would be based agreement to the abolition of extraterritoriality outside Japanese settlements and railway property, provided that Japanese nationals were granted the freedom to reside and to travel anywhere in China, and that Japan be afforded most-favored-nation treatment.

In early May Shigemitsu and Wang met and narrowed down points at issue. At first, it seemed as though negotiations were proceeding according to plan. But at exactly the same time, public opinion within the GMD had veered toward unilateral demands for the abolition of extraterritoriality, and anti-Japanese sentiment became very strong. When the GMD convention was held in Nanjing between May 5 and 17, the mood there was such that Japan became the target of criticism. There was a huge outcry of "Down with Japanese imperialism!" and angry demands for the recovery of Port Arthur and Dalian, of the Manchurian Railway, and withdrawal of Japanese troops guarding railway property. Between mid-May and the end of June, the anti-Japanese movement continued to gain momentum. Repression of anti-Japanese activities became

[5] Shigemitsu Mamoru, *Gaikō Kaisōroku* (Diplomatic reminiscences) (Tokyo: Mainichi Shimbunsha, 1953).

[6] *Ibid.*

increasingly difficult as it became the responsibility of lower-ranking authorities in the three eastern provinces[7]

Although Shidehara diplomacy, with its idealistic trappings, entered the stage once again, the Chinese made no attempt to return Shidehara's goodwill in kind. Instead, they were relieved by Shidehara's return and simply barreled ahead, placing their hopes in revolutionary diplomacy.[8] It may be unfair to place all the blame for the worsening of Sino-Japanese relations and the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident on Shidehara. Still, as his biographer stated, Shidehara's impractical approach to diplomacy with China had already failed once. Therefore, during his second stint as foreign minister, Shidehara should have assumed a humble frame of mind and engaged in a great deal of contemplation and introspection. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that Shidehara did either, perhaps because of stubbornness or pride.[9] If these analyses are correct, there is a pressing need for a new historical assessment of Shidehara diplomacy.

Liutiaogou Incident

The Manchurian Incident was set in motion by the Liutiaogou Incident, which took place at about 10:30 p.m. on September 18, 1931 at Liutiaogou, 8 kilometers north of Fengtian, when explosives were detonated on the tracks of the South Manchuria Railway. The Guandong Army maintained that the explosion was the work of Zhang Xueliang's army and immediately proceeded to attack its North Barracks. By the next morning Chinese troops had fled the barracks, which the Japanese proceeded to occupy.

However, the truth about the incident was exposed for all the world to see after the conclusion of the Greater East Asian War. (Then) Maj. Hanaya Tadashi, a Guandong Army staff officer, was heavily involved in the incident. According to a journal he kept, the Manchurian Incident was the product of the scrupulous planning prowess of Operations Chief of Staff Lt. Col. Staff Ishiwara Kanji, and the commitment and energy of Senior Staff Officer Col. Itagaki Seishirō; both men also served in the Guandong Army. At the time Guandong Army units stationed in Fengtian were the 2nd Infantry Battalion of the Independent Garrison Corps and the 29th Infantry Regiment of the resident 2nd Division. Additionally, the 1st and 4th companies were stationed in Fengtian with the Independent Garrison Corps' 2nd Infantry Battalion; the 2nd Company was stationed in Fushun, and the 3rd Company in Hushitai. At 7:00 p.m. on September 18 the 3rd Company conducted nighttime maneuvers in the area south of Wenguantun, 11 kilometers north of Fengtian. Company Commander Kawashima Tadashi ordered Lt. Kōmoto Suemori to head to Liutiaogou with several subordinates to patrol the railway line west of the North Barracks. Keeping the barracks in his line of sight off to the side, Kōmoto chose a location approximately 800 meters to the south, where he placed an explosive device normally used by cavalry on the rails and detonated it. Sometime after 10:00 p.m. an ear-splitting noise was heard, and pieces of shattered rails and ties hurtled through the air. But since the amount of explosive used was

[7] Morley, *op. cit.*

[8] Hayashi, *op. cit.*

[9] Ujita, *op. cit.*

calibrated so as not to harm any passing Manchurian Railway trains, only two railroad ties were damaged, and the destruction did not extend over even one meter of track.[10]

Simultaneous to the explosion a report was sent by portable telephone to battalion headquarters and the Japanese intelligence agency. Company Commander Kawashima immediately led his men southward, and launched an assault on the North Barracks. Later in addition to Kawashima's forces, the main strength of the battalion was added. By 6:30 a.m. on the morning of September 19, the Japanese had completed their occupation of the North Barracks. Chinese troops at the barracks, the Independent 7th Brigade, under command of Wang Yizhe, numbered 6,800 men; the Shimamoto company, which attacked them, numbered 500. The 29th Regiment managed to expel Chinese troops from the city of Fengtian without any difficulty. By the morning of September 19 all of Fengtian was once again in Japanese hands.

Manchurian Incident: an effect, not a cause

Today everyone in our nation knows that it was the Japanese who struck the match, who instigated the explosion on Manchurian Railway property at Liutiaogou, in a Manchuria whose environment had already turned toxic. Since the IMTFE, the Manchurian Incident has been labeled as the first phase of Japanese aggression in China. However, if the Japanese had not struck that match, the Chinese would assuredly have done the honors. That is how very explosive and volatile the situation in Manchuria had become. The explosion at Liutiaogou was merely the final, tiny cause, the last of a mountain of innumerable causes – the last straw, to borrow an English expression that means "a further difficulty that comes after a series of other difficulties, that makes a situation unbearable." Therefore, the incident was more of an effect than a cause. In other words, the Manchurian Incident was not the first stage of Japanese aggression in China. It is this writer's conclusion that the incident was the inevitable result of Chinese policies that were, for a quarter of a century, hostile and insulting to Japan.

[10] Hanaya Tadashi, "Himerareta Shōwashi: Manshū jihen wa kōshite keikaku sareta" (Hidden history of the Shōwa era: How the Manchurian Incident was planned), Supplement to *Chisei* (December 1956), 40-50.